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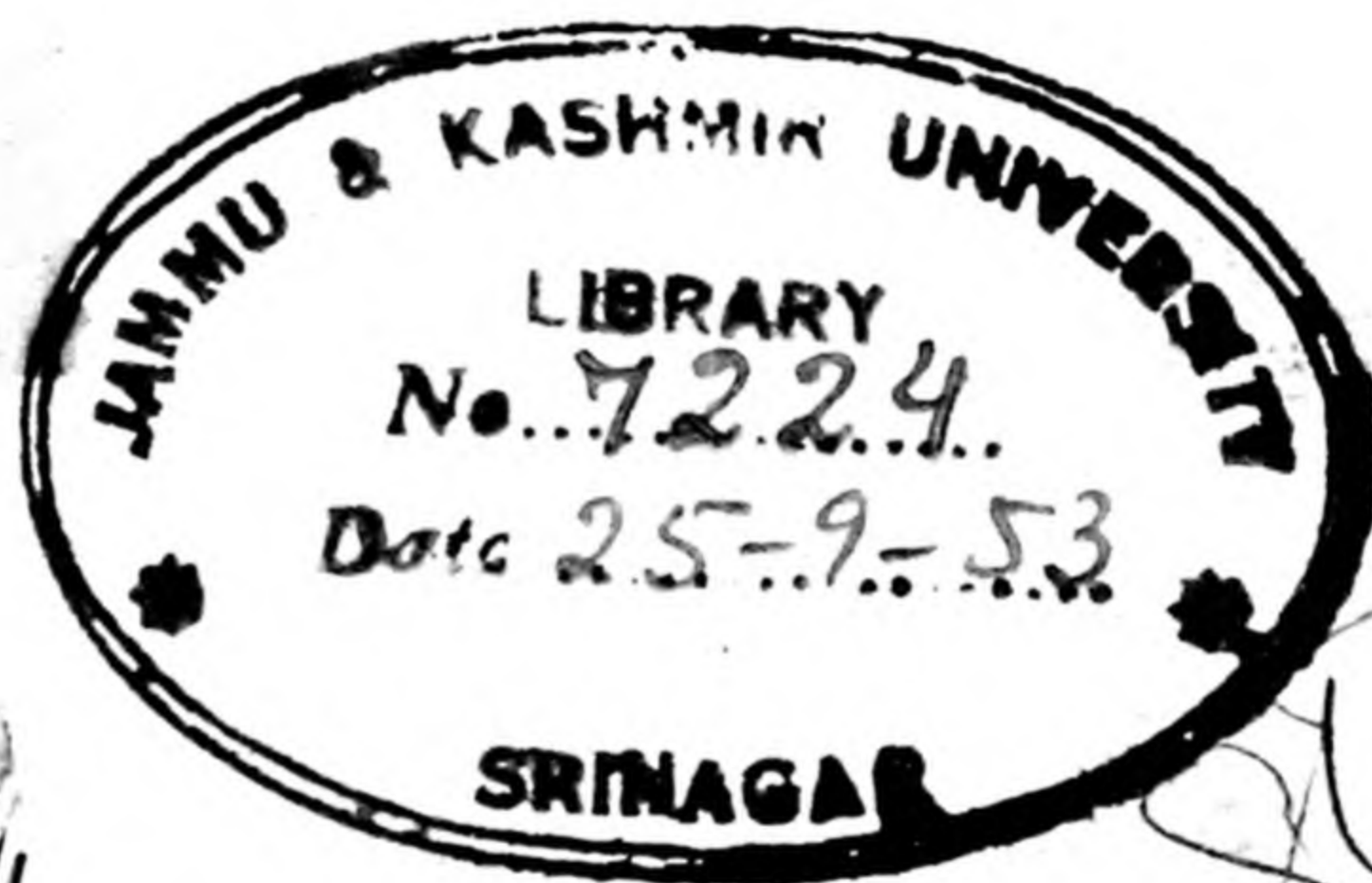
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THE ESSAY

A NOTE ON EXPOSITION

IN GENERAL

THE PASSER-BY who directs you to the city hall, the friend who tells you why he likes a certain beach or what a slang term means or why he came to college, the commentator who explains the significance of what is happening in the world, the scientist who writes a textbook on exterior ballistics—all these are using exposition as a means of communication. Exposition, simply stated, is the giving or explaining of factual material. It is motivated by one primary purpose—the need or the desire to impart information. Thus we see at once that the nature of exposition separates it from other familiar types of communication, such as description, which paints a word picture, or narration, which tells a story.

If we pause long enough to gain even a casual perspective of the writing that we have done in earlier years, we will see that most of it has been devoted to the statement or explanation of factual material. Whether in the form of compositions, examinations, reports, or personal letters, we have been at pains to explain something to someone. Hence, this momentary reflection suffices to show us that our own individual use of writing has, for the most part, had the essential purpose of exposition. The very fact that we have had so frequent opportunity to employ it is proof that exposition is the most basic of the forms of prose. Its need and use as a form of communication are already a part of our experience; our next step is to realize its further potentialities in our lives.

All of us have tried to explain how to do something, but we have not always been able to make ourselves clear. All of us have tried to follow other people's explanations, but we have not always understood exactly what to do. From both of these situations, from both the giving and receiving of information, our experience reveals that the basic problem in exposition is clarity. Only clarity—both of thought and of statement—with its accuracy of detail and ordered sequence of procedure, can make information unmistakably comprehensible to someone else. On the surface this may seem a relatively simple task. Yet, if we recall our own experience, we must admit that in writing about such everyday matters as the personality of a friend, our understanding of what is right, or our method of studying, we find that we fall short of successful communication unless we make a conscious attempt at clarity.

Clarity, this basic requisite of effective exposition, is compounded of three ingredients: the writer's own grasp of his material; his specific objective in writing this material, together with an understanding of the quality of his audience; and his mastery of the techniques involved in presentation.

The first ingredient implies that a general feeling or a hazy concept cannot

lend itself to accuracy in communication. The student who says "I know it, but I can't put it into words" has yet to take his first step. In fact, he has yet to realize that his understanding must be so clear that it will shape itself naturally and readily in words.

The second ingredient, that of the specific objective, must answer the question "For whom am I writing?" With the exception of diary writing, every written word is intended to make meaning to some reader. Obvious as that statement may be, its implication is frequently overlooked by the student, for most students habitually write without aiming at any particular audience. Most of them have the unexpressed feeling that they are writing for an instructor, and that that instructor, with his own knowledge and understanding, will fill in, to some degree at least, certain holes in the development of the material. This attitude is often expressed by the student reaction to criticism: "But you know what I mean." It is plain, then, that if the student is to undergo the discipline of learning to make himself amply clear, he must have in mind a more demanding audience. That audience, for our purposes, should be some person who, for the moment, lacks the writer's specific information or the writer's particular slant, but who possesses an intelligence equal to his.

Once the student has a grasp of his material and an understanding of the receptive possibilities of his audience, he is ready to consider the problem of presentation. Presentation, the third indispensable component of clarity, deals with the *form* in which exposition can be most effectively presented. Once he is familiar with the possible varieties of expository forms and structures, the writer is free to determine for himself how best to shape his thoughts within a given framework by adopting whatever technique seems to him most suitable to his particular need. In evaluating the importance of clarity in communication, the writer should remember that his thoughts are represented only by his written words. He has no opportunity to enter the mind of his reader to see how effective those words have been.

Clarity in itself, however, is not enough for totally effective communication. Only a step behind in importance is interest. The writer will do well to think of his audience—the invisible partner at the receiving end of the line of communication—as one who reads without compulsion, who reads only as long as his interest is maintained, whose initial indifference must be overcome, who must be prodded or amused or cajoled or startled into turning the next page. An original turn of thought, a vocabulary that is lively without being strained or affected, the avoidance of hackneyed phrases—these are some of the means to that end. If exposition is not clear, it fails of its chief purpose. If it is dull, it will go unread.

IN PARTICULAR

The essays that follow these introductory comments are divided into classifications that are more arbitrary than real. They have been so grouped because, to some extent, they exemplify the various techniques which make up exposition. The student should not be misled by this differentiation. An expository essay will most often be a combination of two or more of these types. Learn-

ing to write good exposition may be compared with learning the game of tennis. Many of us learned to play tennis simply by watching others and then by trying the game ourselves, just as most of us were writing exposition long before we had heard of the word. It was only afterwards, when we became conscious of our failure to rise above a certain level of proficiency, that we realized the need of improvement in the various strokes that make up tennis. In like manner, the student will gain by careful practice in writing.

Processes

Perhaps the most fundamental, but not always the most easy, task of exposition is that of explaining how something is done or how something works. In the former case, the writer either gives directions, step by step, or, from the vantage-point of objectivity, explains how it is done. The fact that both the preparation of onion soup and the building of the Golden Gate Bridge fall within this category suffices to make plain the need of determining clearly both the purpose of the exposition and the audience to whom it is directed. Quite obviously, a recipe for onion soup is intended for those who propose to make it, whereas the general public on the one hand and an engineering society on the other would expect different treatments of the process of building a bridge.

Three pitfalls open before the unwary.

When the inexperienced writer explains a process that is thoroughly familiar to him, he frequently falls into the error of assuming too much knowledge on the part of the reader. In plotting the procedure of making a model airplane or building a rock garden, it would be well to take for granted that he is instructing a person who is starting from scratch.

The second danger is a corollary to the first. Knowing his subject so well, the writer puts on paper part of the necessary explanation and *thinks* the rest, overestimating the reader's capacity to fill in the gaps. It cannot be repeated too often that the reader tends to lose interest as soon as he becomes confused.

Lastly, the writer should avoid technical terms which lie beyond the experience of the average person. If their use is necessary, they should be explained in clear language.

Although we live in a mechanistic age, when the results of applied science are changing the bases of our civilization, most people are deplorably ignorant of the forces that form the foundation of those departures. Untutored though we may be, however, we want to have explained to us, in terms that we can understand, those implements of transformation. If we are called upon, or have the desire, to explain the working of some mechanism which in some way or other is of importance to us, we should keep in mind that a familiar comparison will sometimes effect the transition from ignorance to comprehension. Few of us have ever seen a jet-propelled airplane, but we are all familiar with a rotating water-sprinkler; if we are made to realize that the same fundamental law of physics has made possible both contrivances, and if the effecting agency is made clear to us, we shall have some comprehension of the plane.

In the essays that are grouped under PROCESSES, M. F. K. Fisher's comments on soups, in the results of which most of us are interested, indicate what can be

accomplished by a fresh and imaginative approach to a subject usually excluded from general interest. An arresting title, a sense of humor, and stimulating phrasing have lifted this bit of exposition, which could easily have been dry-as-dust, into a circle of reading interest which extends far beyond the kitchen. Quite another problem confronted Mona Gardner in her account of raising chinchillas for the market, for this essay does not set out to give directions to prospective chinchilla farmers, but to inform the general public, whose interest was appealed to by the recounting of the difficulties that accompanied the establishment of the first of such farms in this country. Incidentally, of course, the author knew that chinchilla was of interest to a great many women and, willy-nilly, to their husbands.

Analyses

If a writer discusses automobile accidents or the causes that led to the defeat of a presidential candidate, he is making use of the fruits of analysis to communicate his thought. If he is to meet the challenge, he must so split up the body of fact or opinion that the reader is able to recognize the parts that make up the whole, as well as the relation of the individual parts to one another.

A *formal analysis* carries the implication of completeness. If the essay indicates that the writer is analyzing the races of the world or the ships of the United States Navy, the reader is justified in the expectation that the report will be inclusive, i.e., that some mention will be made of all the components which comprise the whole. The thoroughness of the treatment depends upon the purpose of the writer and the limits of his discussion. An elementary school text might mention briefly the generally recognized groups that, taken together, make up mankind; a college text would carry the analysis further by subdividing the groups. In either case, however, the treatment should be consistent: a subdividing in one group should be paralleled in the others. If the discussion is sufficiently thorough to justify distinguishing among types of battleships, the analysis will lose in effectiveness if a like distinction is not made in the case of landing-craft.

Much more common is *informal analysis*. We are seldom called upon to make a complete analysis of a subject, but we are often confronted by the need of disentangling a problem in such a way that its essentials may be rearranged in a pattern which can be recognized by others. Paramount in such a case is the process of sifting, of evaluating, of retaining the important and discarding the unimportant or irrelevant. What constitutes the greatness of Lincoln or the charm of a New England autumn? Is basketball more exciting than hockey? What do I want to make of my life? Intelligible answers to such questions require a skillful disposition and blending of the material which the writer has found to be pertinent to his purpose.

In considering the impact of science upon ethics, J. B. S. Haldane, in one of the essays that follow, admits in his opening sentence that his treatment does not presume to be exhaustive. The process of selection is implicit in the statement. When Louis Untermeyer and Carter Davidson discuss the prejudice against poetry, they select the three complaints which appear "most com-

monly." Betsey Barton, writing on the behavior of pain, makes it clear that hers is no scientific treatise, no all-inclusive treatment of a complex problem, but simply an opinion based on her own experience.

Nevertheless, no matter how informal and personal, an analysis should not be fragmentary. It should give the reader a sense of completeness within the limits expressed or implied.

Definitions

A dictionary is most satisfactory in the definition of concrete or specific words. If one looks up "goober" and discovers it to be another word for "peanut," there is no failure in communication. Such is not the case, unfortunately, in dealing with those abstractions, like "truth" or "poverty," indispensable to adult thinking, for such words are often defined in terms of other abstractions. Although we may all agree with the dictionary that a ruffian is cruel and brutal, our several concepts of those adjectives may vary, and we may therefore disagree as to the appropriateness of applying those terms to a specific individual.

The typical dictionary definition involves two steps, classification and differentiation. If we say that philology is the science of the study of language, we first classify it as one of the sciences and then distinguish it from other sciences. If a kettle is defined as a metallic vessel for boiling liquids, the same procedure has been followed.

As one of the recognized categories of exposition, however, a definition implies an extended discussion, a process in which the word or term is elaborated far beyond the limits to which a dictionary is confined. Here the writer has ample opportunity to utilize to the utmost the resources of his mind and experience, as well as to make use of other expository techniques, such as analysis or comparison, to produce a rounded and satisfactory explanation of the word or term.

Bertrand Russell's "The Good Life" has been placed among the essays grouped under the heading ARGUMENTATION because he states explicitly that he wishes to persuade us to his way of thinking; yet, this selection is also an extended definition. At the beginning of the essay, he states that "the good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge," but he knew that he would fail to communicate his thought if he did not explain exactly what he meant by the key words "love" and "knowledge." By first condensing his thought to a single sentence and then defining his terms, he followed a procedure particularly appropriate to the extended definition.

There are other devices which assist in defining. Like H. W. Fowler, we may reinforce the initial definition by a series of examples which pound home the central thought; or, like Donald Hough, we may clear the way to understanding by ridding the reader's mind of prevalent and erroneous concepts.

Comparisons

The evaluation of anything which falls within the scope of our experience is based firmly on the mental process of comparison. Confronted by something

new, we clarify our reaction by aligning it with something in our past experience that seems to offer some pertinent aspect of similarity or dissimilarity. The greater the number and variety of the comparisons which we are able to summon to our assistance, the more valid will be our judgment. The most common of the figures of speech, the metaphor and the simile, are examples of the constant activity of the mind in making comparisons.

It is not surprising, then, that the technique of comparison is one of the most useful in the field of exposition. By means of it, we are able to illumine the unfamiliar by means of the familiar. When a youngster comes home from a zoo and says that "a jaguar is like a cat, only larger," he is unconsciously making use of this device.

For our purposes, comparison falls into two categories, analogy and contrast. *Analogy* derives its effectiveness from pointing up essential likenesses between two things not ordinarily closely associated in our minds. Metaphor is analogy in its simplest form, as when we speak of a "campus wolf," or the "Statute of Liberty" play on the football field. In an extended analogy, the two dissimilar objects of our comparison must have a number of points of likeness. In "The Builders," Vannevar Bush develops an interesting analogy between the groups who are concerned with the structure of science and those concerned with a structure of stone.

In reverse, *contrast* places the emphasis upon differences between two things ordinarily associated together. Thus, if we were comparing the eating habits of the French and the Americans, we would ignore the obvious fact that both eat meat and vegetables and concentrate our attention on interesting points of difference, such as the fact that the Frenchman eats his meat and vegetables in separate courses or that he eats the roots, and not the stalks, of celery. In an essay which follows, Robert P. Tristram Coffin compares the English and the Americans by indicating differences in attitude toward such mutual experiences as travel, marriage, and the care of children.

Judgments

One of the first activities of the mind is to judge, but it is only with the passage of years that we acquire the experience in living that enables us to advance from the personal to the impersonal point of view, to attain that objectivity that makes true judgment possible. A great many people never make the transition, a situation which the psychologists define as retarded adolescence. An adult who habitually forms opinions in terms of his personal desires and prejudices is no uncommon phenomenon, but he is not a person whose pronouncements should be regarded seriously.

Each of us is limited by his experience—and experience includes all of life—in his capacity to judge a girl, a poem, a motor, or the decision of a quarterback. Beyond the extent of his knowledge, beyond his ability to set up and compare performances in a like field, no man can be expected to go. Everyone, however, has within him the possibility of utilizing to the utmost the sum total of his life experience, large or small, provided that he approaches the problem in question with a dispassionate mind, with a desire to recognize

attitudes differing from his own, and with the goal in mind of being completely fair and honest. His success in such an endeavor will depend upon the resources within himself. At the same time, the judgment will be to some degree invalidated if he fails to convey something of himself which creates a bond of interest with his reader.

Argumentation

For many years, argumentation was regarded as a form of writing distinct from exposition, description (a hybrid form), and narration. The classical distinction was that the aim of exposition was to explain, of description to portray, of argumentation to persuade, of narration to relate. To a limited extent, this is valid. More truly, however, argumentation is a category of exposition in that the writer utilizes the techniques of exposition in whatever combinations are demanded by his subject matter. The only distinctive quality of argumentation lies in the aim to overcome expressed or implied opposition.

In most cases, the reader senses at once whether he is being informed or persuaded. In the latter case, he should immediately be on his guard, not in belligerency, but in quiet watchfulness. Queries arise in his mind: Have both sides of this question been presented fairly in order that I may come to a just decision? Has an appeal been made to my emotions or prejudices, rather than to my intelligence? Has my attention to the main issue been diverted by minor considerations which pose in the guise of major ones? Is the reasoning consistently logical? Does the writer openly champion one side of the question, or does he conceal his intention behind an assumed impartiality?

Research

Never in the history of the world has research been more productive of spectacular results than today. The time seems to have arrived when a handful of experts could change our world beyond recognition. Yet, even in less dramatic fields than that of pure science, research becomes increasingly important. Banks, business houses, and industry in all its forms are calling upon people who are trained in the procedure of gathering and interpreting information. There is every indication that the demand will increase.

The student's initiation into the discipline of research should be governed by the aim to exhaust the resources of his library regarding a subject which has been rigidly delimited, preferably after consultation with his instructor. He must find out what to look for, where to look for it, how to take notes, and, above all, how to save time. Research has its own conventions, in the matter of footnotes, citations, and bibliography, which may be observed in the model in this volume.

Once acquired, the technique of research is applicable to any subject in any field. The debut may not be exhilarating, but its mastery is enormously valuable.

MODELS

1. *Processes*

M. F. K. FISHER *says that she came to write How to Cook a Wolf—of which the following is a part—“because I was rather tired of having people tell me that the pleasures of the table were the prerogatives of the rich. I have eaten a great many dinners full of truffles and rich pâtés and sauces, all washed down with beautiful wines, but probably the best ones of my life have been shared with people who never heard or dreamed of such things and still had a good time.” She is now at work on what she calls a “gastronomical reader,” which will be published soon.*

HOW TO BOIL WATER

“Here, Miss,” I says, “what d’ye call this?” “Soup, Sir,” she says. “Soup? Soup? Well, blast me then!” I says, polite-like. “Is this what I’ve been sailin’ on for the past fifty years?”

—The Peppery Sayings of an Old Salt,
HENRY TREWELYN, 1869

THERE was a semi-apocryphal figure, in my childhood, who could not even boil water. I forget who she was: a Southern girl, I think, who went to finishing school in Virginia with my mother.

“Oh,” my mother used to say, snorting a little and tossing her head half scornfully and half with a kind of wistful envy, “oh, she couldn’t even boil water!” Then my mother would add, “. . . before she was married!”

For a long time I believed that the first pangs of connubial bliss brought with them a new wisdom, a kind of mystic knowledge that slipped with the wedding ring over all the fingers of the bride, so that at last and suddenly and completely she knew how to boil water.

Now, I believe otherwise. Now, I believe that few women, Southern or not, even virgins or not, ever realize the spacious limits of putting water in a pot and boiling it. When is water boiling? When, indeed, is water water?

Water is water, Webster says, when it is a colorless, inodorous, transparent

“How to Boil Water,” from *How to Cook a Wolf* by M. F. K. Fisher. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc.

fluid, consisting of two volumes of hydrogen to one of oxygen. It can also be rain, or the sea, or a diamond's luster. The water I mean, though . . . the water the Southern maiden couldn't boil . . . is the clear good water that flows from a tap, or if you are lucky from a spring or well. It is the best for cooking waffles.

And when is water boiling? It can be said, with few people to argue the point, that water boils when it has been heated to two hundred and twelve degrees Fahrenheit. Myself, I would say that when it bubbles with large energetic bubbles, and looks ready to hop from the kettle, and makes a rocky rather than a murmuring noise, and sends off a deal of steam, it is boiling.

At this point, full of sound and fury, it is ready to be used, given, of course, that it has been prepared in a clean vessel for some purpose other than the purely scientific one of discovering when it would boil. Most people, whether or not they are married and therefore prescient, as I so long ago thought they would be about water at least, do not know that there is one moment at which it is *au point*, and then all the rest of the time it is overdone, most as surely as is a broiled sirloin steak or a crepe suzette.

The quaint old fiction of the kettle simmering all day on the hearth, waiting to be turned into a delicious cup of tea, is actively disturbing to anyone who cares very much whether his tea will be made from lively water instead of a liquid which in spite of its apparent resemblance to Webster's definition is flat, exhausted, tasteless—in other words, with the hell cooked out of it.

It is safe to say that when the water boils, as it surely will, given enough heat under it, it is ready. Then, at that moment and no other, pour it into the teapot or over or around or into whatever it is meant for, whatever calls for it. If it cannot be used then, turn off the heat and start over again when you yourself are ready; it will harm you less to wait than it will the water to boil too long.

And now, irrespective of your virginity or lack of it, you may consider yourself able to boil water. Nobody will ever shake her head about you, as my mother still does occasionally about the Southern girl; or if heads are shaken now and then, at least you will know that it is not because your tea is made with an overdone melange of hydrogen and oxygen.

2

The natural progression from boiling water to boiling water with something in it can hardly be avoided, and in most cases is heartily to be wished for. As a steady diet, plain water is inclined to make thin fare, and even saints, of which there are an unexpected number these days, will gladly agree that a few herbs and perhaps a carrot or two and maybe a bit of meager bone on feast days can mightily improve the somewhat monotonous flavor of the hot liquid.

Soup, in other words, is good.

It is probably the oldest cooked food on the earth, after roasted meat (in spite of the great Maitre Escoffier's dictum that "the nutritious liquids known

under the name of Soups are of comparatively recent origin and as now served do not date any farther back than the early years of the nineteenth century").

How it was discovered is best left unpondered except by radio script-writers and people who try to interest children in the Stone Age. Its inevitable progress from a pot with a watery bone in it to potage à la Reine and Crème Vichysoise is for anyone to read in forty thousand cookbooks, most of them bad.

"Certain fundamental rules must be carefully assimilated before one can learn all the requirements for making a truly excellent soup stock," one gastronomist writes, and then goes on to give a good if elaborate ritual. Probably the best of these is Sheila Hibben's, in her *Kitchen Manual*; the result is as clear, rich, and comforting as her own prose, and worthy to be well studied by anyone who wants at least a nodding acquaintance with *la haute cuisine*. It is probably unfortunate that such classical procedures as hers and Mrs. Moody's and Escoffier's for making the basic stock will become increasingly good escape-reading material in direct ratio to the possibility of following them in our small kitchens and hurried hours.

Another drawback to this, and probably the most important one for people who are pondering how best to cook the wolf that sniffs through the keyhole every night about twelve-thirty, is that by the time you have taken a day off and assembled the necessary ingredients and used enough fuel to braise them, simmer them, boil them, and clarify them properly, you have spent a fair portion of the week's food budget. The result is good, but Man should not live on consommé alone, and if you make the stock as you are told to, there will be very little money left for anything else.

A great deal of misinformation has been quoted for several centuries about the delicious soup that sits for years at the back of every good French stove. It is supposed to be like old-fashioned yeast, always renewing itself and yet always stemming from the original "starter," so that a chicken bone thrown in last Easter may long since have disappeared but will still lend its aromatic aura to the present brew.

I do not like this fiction, and prefer not to believe it. I think soup-pots should be made fresh now and then, like people's minds at the New Year. They should be emptied and scrubbed and started over again, with clean water, a few peppercorns, whatever little scraps are left from yesterday, and then today's bones and lettuce leaves and cold toast and such. Set at the back of the stove and left to simmer, with an occasional stir from the cook, they can make a fine clear stock for sauces as well as a heartening broth.

And . . .

In the country, or wherever there is a big kitchen with constant heat in the stove, they are economical. Otherwise they are foolish and outmoded, and will make fuel bills rise and apartments smell.

People who work, whether in offices or Red Cross rooms, must glean what nostalgic comfort they can from merely reading Escoffier and Hibben and the others, and resign themselves (without too much difficulty, I hope!) to some

such potage as the following, which costs little, takes even less time to make, and has infinite variations, according to the state of the vegetable bin.

CHINESE CONSOMME

- 2 cups beef or chicken consommé (1 can) or vegetable juice saved from cooking
- 2 cups (1 can) tomato juice
- 1 stalk celery, sliced very thin
- 1 green onion and stalk, sliced very thin and/or a few very thin slices of whatever vegetable lurks in the bin, such as squash, cucumber, radish, etc.
- 1 tablespoon butter or olive oil
- ½ cup dry white wine (or juice of ½ lemon)

Heat the consommé and tomato juice. Put everything else into a hot tureen or casserole, pour the soup over, and serve at once. The nearly transparent rounds and crescents of the raw vegetables float on the top, and with the wine give a delicate flavor that seldom needs other seasoning.

This consommé, in spite of the fact that it need not even have meat broth in it, is very stimulating as well as beautiful to look at, and could never be dismissed as *thin*, the way Abraham Lincoln did a "homeopathic soup that was made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had been starved to death." It is an appetizing first course; with buttered toast and perhaps baked apples and cream to follow, it makes a simple pleasant supper.

Another good consommé which takes little time is a variant of the onion soup of blessed memory you used to drink early in the morning at Les Halles, after you'd watched the last of the big wagons piled with baby carrots and round satiny onions unload and trundle off again. (Was it you, or was it someone else you remember meeting once in a dream . . . a long peaceful dream, but beautiful and exciting too.)

PARISIAN ONION SOUP

- 2 cans (1 quart) beef or chicken consommé
- 2 or 3 sweet onions, sliced very thin
- 3 tablespoons butter or good oil
- 1 heaping tablespoon flour
- Rye bread, sliced thin and toasted
- Grated snappy cheese (Parmesan type)

Brown the onions in the fat, sprinkle with flour, and stir while it simmers for ten minutes. Add the soup, preferably heated, and let boil slowly until the onion is very tender. Spread the cheese thickly on the toast, and melt under a quick broiler. (This is better than putting the toast and cheese on the soup and then melting, since the toast stays crisper.) Pour the soup into a hot tureen, cover with the toast, and serve at once.

This is what might be called a "light but hearty" soup, and with a good salad and fruit and coffee would please any hungry family.

There are many others, which are even more a complete meal in themselves,

and which like all such dishes can be changed according to the will and pocketbook of the chef. Here is a basic recipe for chowders, which can be stretched this way or that and made country-simple or town-elegant.

CHOWDER

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound lean bacon or salt pork, cut in small cubes
 2 large onions, chopped fine
 $\frac{1}{2}$ green pepper chopped fine (optional)
 3 cups water
 3 large potatoes, cut in small cubes
 Salt and pepper as desired
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rich cream (optional)
 1 small can chopped pimientos (optional)
 1 can whole-kernel corn *or* 1 can chopped clams *or* 1 can tomato-pulp or whatever else you can think of

Fry the bacon until crisp. Add the onions and green pepper and brown well. Add the water, and bring to a boil. Put in the potatoes and let cook slowly until tender. Add the rest of the ingredients, heat thoroughly, and serve.

There are some proud boosters of regional cookery who say that a chowder made with anything but crumbled soda crackers is heinous and insulting. They can but ignore the potatoes, then, and substitute their chosen thickener, and feel happy.

There is another well-worn controversy among chowder-lovers as to which is correct, the kind made with milk or the kind made with tomato and water. Long ago it may have been dependent on transportation and climate and so forth, so that in the winter when the cow was still fresh there was milk, and in the summer when the tomatoes were plump and heavy they were used. . . .

Who knows? Furthermore, who cares? You should eat according to your own tastes, as much as possible, and, if you want to make a chowder with milk *and* tomato, and crackers *and* potatoes, do it, if the result pleases you (which sounds somewhat doubtful, but possible).

Once the Vicomte de Mauduit remarked to somebody, or perhaps somebody remarked to the Vicomte de Mauduit, that eating is an art worthy to rank with the other methods by which man chooses to escape from reality. Stripped of its slightly pontifical rhythm, this statement sounds quite true. And one of its strange proofs, in some ways, is the present vogue for Vichysoisse.

This bland unctuous broth, served in a hundred modish restaurants from New York to San Francisco, seems in some mysterious way to sooth the throbbing minds of today's children even as it calmed the outraged stomachs of yesterday's aristocratic grandfathers, who absorbed it willy-nilly by prescription at Vichy and Baden-Baden, instead of ordering it eagerly at the Ruban Bleu or Jack's.

There seems to be something about its robust delicacy, its frigid smoothness, its slightly vulgar but so dainty sprinkling of chives on the white surface, that makes even young-ancient metropolitans with sinus trouble or other occupa-

tional diseases forget the age they live in, and sit back refreshed and quiet for a minute or two.

It is too bad that this current piece of gastronomical voodoo is so expensive and complicated to make—at least, like Mrs. Hibben's classical consommé, *correctly*. The cream must have exactly 24 per cent fat content: sometimes the mixture should be at 196° Fahrenheit, sometimes at 212° Fahrenheit. One-sixteenth of a teaspoonful of ground mace must be added at just the correct moment.

However, there are compromises which can be admitted, whether you approve of them or not. Here is a recipe, a combination really of Escoffier's Soupe à la Bonne Femme and one I found in a calendar published by the gas company in the Canton of Vaud in Switzerland. It is excellent hot, but to make it into a mighty passable Vichysoisse it should have some cream beaten into it and be put into the coldest part of the icebox for at least twenty-four hours.

CREAM OF POTATO SOUP

4 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced thin
2 mild onions, sliced thin
2 tablespoons flour
4 tablespoons butter (no compromise here)
1 cup potato water
3 cups rich scalded milk
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1 tablespoon chopped chives if possible
Salt and pepper

Stew the onions gently in one-half the butter for fifteen minutes. Add the potatoes and cover with a small amount of water, about two cups. Cook gently until tender. Drain, saving one cup of the water, and put the vegetables through a strainer.

Make a *roux* of the remaining butter and the flour, add the potato water and the seasoning, and stir in the scalded milk. Combine this mixture with the strained vegetables and heat thoroughly, beating with an egg beater for several minutes. Add the chopped herbs and serve at once. (Or chill and serve next day as Vichysoisse.)

There is another kind of soup, certainly not bland but with a freakish appeal to it, which should be served as icy-cold as Vichysoisse and might well act as an alternative to those weary brittle souls who live through the summer months in any city, thanks mainly to what their grandmothers probably called "cold potato cream." It is simple to make, and inexpensive, and unlike Vichysoisse is fairly elastic, depending in the main on how fortunate you are in growing or buying herbs.

This recipe stems partly from Paul Reboux and partly from a Spanish chef on an Italian freighter which once ran between Marseilles and Portland, Oregon.

GASPACHO

- 1 generous mixed handful of chives, chervil, parsley, basil, marjoram . . . any or all, but *fresh*
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 sweet pepper, pimiento or Bell
- 2 peeled and seeded tomatoes
- 1 small glass olive oil (or really flavorful nut oil or substitute)
- The juice of 1 lemon
- 1 mild onion, sliced paper-thin
- 1 cup diced cucumber
- Salt and pepper
- ½ cup bread-crumbs

Chop the herbs and mash thoroughly with the garlic, pimiento, and tomatoes, adding the oil very slowly, and the lemon juice. Add about 3 glasses of cold water, or as much as you wish. Put in the onion and the cucumber, season, sprinkle with bread-crumbs, and ice for at least four hours before serving.

This Gaspacho can be altered to fit what comes from the garden, but it should always have oil and garlic and lemon juice and herbs rubbed heavily together, and onion and some other vegetable floating around in it; and it should be very cold indeed. Then it is a perfect summer soup, tantalizing, fresh, and faintly perverse as are all primitive dishes eaten by too worldly people.

It is good for lunch, or for supper. It is especially good if you have a barbecue, and want some legitimate and not too alcoholic way to keep your guests busy while you turn the steak: put a big tureen of it on the table, and let them serve themselves into cups, and eat toasted crusts with it if they want to. Then when you declare the entree done, whether it be filet or ground-round patties, you will find appetites sharp and wits fairly clear, and a satisfying patina of conversation glimmering in the air.

JEROME WEIDMAN *was born in New York City in 1913. He attended the College of the City of New York and New York University and eventually studied law at the latter. Although admitted to the bar, Weidman did not follow the legal profession. Rather, he chose to write stories with a New York background. He attracted a sizable following among those who appreciate tales told with a clinical eye for detail and impersonal disregard for the feelings of the timid or ultra-conservative. Typical collections of Weidman's work include I Can Get It for You Wholesale, The Horse That Could Whistle "Dixie," and I'll Never Go There Any More.*

HOW I WRITE SHORT STORIES

THE SHORT-STORY writer who assembles his work between the covers of a book voluntarily gives up one of the advantages peculiar to his craft. His stories may have been scattered through a dozen magazines over a period of years. It has been physically inconvenient heretofore to appraise them. Now, however, he has tied them into a readily available knot upon which attention may be focused with ease. He is no longer assured the immunity from critical scrutiny that he enjoyed before. He has, in the language of a more muscular profession, led with his chin. Perhaps it is because he has seen many a pugilist go on to the championship of his class while employing this odd method of offense that the writer continues to gather his far-flung short stories into books.

I started to write short stories because I wanted to write novels, and it seemed more intelligent to begin practising with a form that could be handled in a few pages. I was wrong. In like manner one might advise a poet that the best preparation for writing an epic is a studious application to the structure of the limerick. The technique of the novel, or, to use the phrase that has begun to receive much circulation in textbooks on the subject, the well-made novel, differs as radically from the technique of the short story as the technique of the poetic drama differs from that of the sonnet. But before I discovered my error I found that through practice I had learned something about the short story. By that time I had written many and published several. I liked the medium. I continued to write more and, as the problem of getting them published grew easier, I liked the medium even better.

The first difficulty I encountered when I started to write short stories was with length. The short ones came out too long and the long ones came out too short. The reason was soon obvious. A short one would look embarrassingly short; I was afraid that I had not given it enough attention; I went back and added more. It came out longer; but it did not come out the story I had planned; where the resemblance between the story I had in mind and the story I had written was closer, the defects were more obvious. The long ones, on the other hand, seemed to take such an unconscionable time in the writing that I rushed them. I was impatient to be done with the story in hand so I could start on another. As a result I would pass over an incident that cried for dramatization in terms of dialogue and action and dismiss it with a sentence or two of narrative summary. To counteract this tendency, I adopted the method of making outlines. At the head of a sheet of paper I would jot down, preferably in one sentence, the point of the story I wanted to write. Beneath I would list numerically the scenes I had chosen from the many I had observed or invented to illustrate my point. All problems of plot and structure

"How I Write Short Stories," from *The Saturday Review of Literature*. April 15, 1939. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

were thrashed out and settled on this outline sheet. Once they were settled, and not before, I would start to write. As soon as I found that it was almost unbearably difficult to stick to the outline, I knew I was on the right road. Regardless of what brilliant turns of phrase tempted me into ornate digressions and embroidered by-paths, I stuck to the line of the story as I had mapped it on the outline sheet. It was a matter of several months before I could work comfortably and easily this way. The finished stories resembled more closely the stories I had had in mind. And bit by bit the finished stories began to sell. Gradually, as the method became more familiar, the necessity for elaborate outlines disappeared. In a year or two I had discarded the written outline sheets for a rigid mental equivalent. Occasionally, when I find myself getting gay, I go back to written outlines for a few weeks. I have known writers who found this method boring and unnecessary. I found it tedious and helpful.

I have never belonged to the You-Can-Cut-Off-My-Right-Arm-Up-To-Here-But-You-Can't-Cut-Off-That-Paragraph-From-My-Story school of writers. Perhaps if I had, I might have published better stories. But I daresay I would have published fewer. I have not found the demands of editors taxing or beyond endurance; on occasion I have found them to be incomprehensible. Once they have purchased a story, they seem to know what to do with it. The short-story writer's life becomes complicated only by the type of editor who has the mistaken notion that he can conjure a special kind of story out of an author by talking to him at great length in the manner of a football coach sending his team out on the field to beat the rival school.

On the whole, I have found editors friendly and pleasant, but unpredictable and uncertain and occasionally embarrassing in their desperation. So seldom do they get what they think they want that they tend to become incoherent in their insistent repetition of their needs. A writer does well to listen to them, but not too often and not for too long. They all want "good" stories and they all have their own definition of the word "good." It is never a short definition. Usually it takes the form of a thinly disguised statement of the particular magazine's editorial policy. To keep the vicious circle spinning prettily, the next step for the writer is to determine what that editorial policy is. I used to spend a good deal of time worrying about this. I no longer do. Judging by the wide gaps that exist between the material that finally appears in their magazines and their idealized and impassioned statements of what they insist on getting, I have been forced to conclude that they are either men with both eyes planted on the unattainable, and hence are unaware of what is going on at their feet, or they are just plain damned fools. I should say that they possess the qualities of both, but to no greater extent, probably, than most people, including writers.

There are, I suppose, as many kinds of editors as there are magazines to employ them. I have been impressed by two types. The first, anxious to coax from you material that you would fling at his head if you had it, will buy you an excellent lunch with an office petty-cash voucher and then prevent you from enjoying it by boring the pants off you with intimate details about his guppy

tank and his war experiences; all editors over forty seem to have commanded brigades in France at the age of twenty-two and "everything that's happened to me since then has been anticlimax." The second type of editor will call up and ask you politely, in a voice completely devoid of nonsense, to come down to his office and cut two thousand words from a story that he likes but cannot use because of its length. From the first editor you will get nothing but a temporarily expanded waistline and a feeling that perhaps you should not have given up your job selling vacuum cleaners on a commission basis. From the editor of the second class you will get a check and a sense of well-being that comes from knowing that you have improved something that you thought was a fairly good piece of work in the first place.

I am no longer surprised when a story sells, only pleased. I am constantly surprised at the market it sells to, sometimes amazed. Many times, with the words of a particular editor still ringing in my ears, I have molded a story to fit what he had told me were his specific needs. The stories were never successful. Even when they were sold and published they gave me no sense of accomplishment. Reading them in print made me feel uncomfortable and, I must confess, a bit ashamed. They were not honest.

After recovering from my original discomfort over these unsuccessful stories which had been aimed at a specific market, I tried to analyze the reasons for their failure. The mechanical defects were easily apparent. I had violated the very important short-story rule of natural length; I had compressed them or stretched them to fit a particular space. I had introduced a girl because this magazine insisted on girls in its stories, even though my theme required nothing more feminine than a boxing glove. I had removed an unpleasant character and substituted one that the editor would find more pleasing. I did many more things of this nature which tended to warp the stories beyond all recognition of my original intent. They were similar to the suit that a tailor might make for a customer he had never seen but whose measurements he had guessed at from the overheard conversation of the man's friends. It seemed unfair that after all this work, work that I never would have done on my own, the editor should refuse, however politely, to buy the story. My time is not extraordinarily valuable, but I dislike to waste it. I probed deeper. I went over the stories I had sold and compared them with those I had not. I made an amazing discovery. I found that the successful stories were the ones I had written to please myself.

This does not mean that the stories which sold were the ones I found vastly entertaining. I fail to see how any author, when he remembers the weariness and irritation that accompanied its creation, can find his own work entertaining. The stories that were successful were the stories I had written to my own satisfaction, the stories that had come out on paper with a close resemblance to the ones I had in mind. When I wrote the story I had planned, I was doing my own work. When I wrote the story an editor wanted, I was doing somebody else's work. I do other people's work badly.

Having reached this conclusion, I have acted upon it ever since. I write the stories I want to write in the way I think they should be written. Enough of

them sell to keep me reasonably solvent as well as reasonably certain that I am on the right track. The ones that do not sell probably were not very good stories, anyway.

MELVILLE CANE *One does not ordinarily think of a lawyer as writing poetry, or of a poet as practicing law, but Melville Cane (b. 1879) would see nothing unusual about such a combination. As an undergraduate at Columbia he contributed light verse to several magazines. After graduation he studied law and in 1903 was admitted to the New York bar. For many years he has been a member of the firm of Ernst, Cane, and Berner, and a specialist in copyright law. Long after his college days Cane resumed writing poetry, this time ranging from impressionism to a blend of the serious and the lightly sophisticated. The curious may consult his Poems, New and Selected (1938). His work also appears in such collections as Untermeyer's Modern American Poetry.*

MAKING A POEM

BUT HOW do you go about writing your poems?"

A fair question, but I confess I usually stiffen and close up under it, as if the answer were too complicated for utterance, in any event incomprehensible. However, on occasion when the questioner by her serious eagerness—it's usually a she—has demonstrated her right to enlightenment, I've been moved to search for an intelligible answer.

When I was a small boy we enshrined in our library huge, uncomfortable one-volume editions, in calf or morocco, of "The Complete Poetical Works" of Byron, Scott, Moore, Burns, also the New England "classics," Longfellow, Whittier, Emerson. I recall with what awe I approached them. Their authors were "Poets," and as such aloof Olympians, divinely chosen, whose words were all equally holy and beautiful beyond the reach of criticism. These rare and special souls grouped themselves in my imagination upon a mountain-peak, close to the All Highest, sharing his ethereal rays.

While my particular case was doubtless extreme, it represents, I find to an amazing degree, the attitude of the uneducated reading public toward poets and poetry. Poets apparently are of a race apart, their work is "inspired." To most persons the nature of the creative act, the factors involved, remain a mystery too troublesome for investigation.

Being a lawyer as well as a writer of verse makes the situation even more perplexing, produces further questions.

"How do you find time to do it?" "How do you manage to have enough energy over, after a long day at the office?" "I suppose you write only on sum-

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mer vacations." Self-consciously disclaiming any superiority of virtuousness, one replies that the time some people take for bridge or golf can be used in writing; that the intense desire to do a thing may generate its own energy in the doing; that the act of composition can assert itself, regardless of place, day of the week or season.

Now, if this simple preliminary observation manages to sink in acceptably, I may next be confronted with the query which opens this piece:

"But how do you go about writing your poems?"

There's an element of bafflement in that challenging "but." I counter with:

"You've oversimplified the problem. Each poem proceeds from its own peculiar momentum."

The other evening a sympathetic young woman pursued this very line of cross-examination, ending with: "But you must start with some form, mustn't you?" She was fingering the pages of a book of mine. "Take this short piece," she demanded, 'One by One.' What have you got to say about that?"

This, in substance, is what I said about that. But first to set down the poem, in all its simplicity.

One by one,
Branch to branch,
Leaves topple,
Zigzag
Through motionless October,
Struggle,
Founder,—
Golden birds
With broken wings.

I was spending a Sunday in the country at the height of autumn. The foliage had turned to gold and scarlet; the sun, bright in a cloudless sky, had lost some of its earlier intensity. On every hand were intimations of a dying season. I walked along a shady road past fields stacked with corn-stalks, past fading wild-flowers. The scene held both serenity and sadness. Unconsciously as I moved along I must have relaxed the stresses of city life, yielded to the mood of the season and for the moment been at peace. It is this state of detachment, this absence of conflict which must ensue before artistic creation is possible. This condition can be induced consciously; more often it simply happens.

That day it simply happened. The gentlest breeze stirred; a few leaves now and then slowly drifted down from tall New England maples, not in a cloudy swirl but one by one. That was how I saw and felt them, "one by one." The words persisted warmly, appealingly. I stepped through the file of trees to the beat of them. This one-by-oneness, this singleness of each leaf fitted my own sense of solitude; the phrase had acquired heat and feeling. It had soon become an entity, a nucleus, the signal to me, should I choose to heed it, that a poem was in process of becoming. In this instance I did choose to listen and obey.

Accordingly I set to work to report the experience as objectively, as free from moral comment, as possible.

The initial haunting phrase struck me as the right unit line to set the pace and suggest the climate of the poem. I likewise saw the need of brevity in the telling. These were not arbitrary, a priori decisions, mentally arrived at, but rather commands imposed on the sensibilities by something beyond my control. A convenient name for this something is the creative process; through its activity form and content are inseparable manifestations of one unifying operation.

Thus my first line became

One by one.

I then proceeded to reobserve the occurrence. The movement extended down from the top of each tree, from

Branch to branch.

This made a satisfactory companion line to the first, of equal length and appropriate weight. With these preliminaries at least tentatively sketched,—for they were of course subject not only to change but to abandonment—it was now the moment to introduce the *dramatis personae* and their course. I next wrote:

Leaves flutter,
Zigzag
Through glorious October.

But, submitted to a sharper test, “flutter” seemed commonplace and inexact as well, and “glorious” seemed mere filler, contributing nothing to the life of the poem. Once freed from the branch the leaves more accurately “went down” rather than fluttered. “Topple” seemed best to describe the helplessness I wished to indicate. “Zig-zag” I liked from the beginning since it suggested retarded movement, backing and filling. And further to emphasize a certain timelessness and impendingness, I substituted “motionless” for “glorious.”

By this time the poem was well along its brief career, the leaves were making their inconsequential descent. If their destiny were merely to drop to earth, the situation would have been unworthy of record. Something more was implicit, a sense of drama which I attempted to supply with the single word

Struggle,

followed by the word of defeat:

Founder.

I chose these two words carefully out of many synonyms not only for their apt meaning, but because “struggle” made a sound-balance, though not a rhyme, with “topple,” and “founder” with “October,” thus also weaving a closer texture for the poem.

Up to this point, therefore, I had written:

One by one,
Branch to branch,
Leaves topple,
Zigzag
Through motionless October,
Struggle,
Founder.

I had induced the mood, found the right line-by-line pace, suggested the slow, seasonal disintegration, but had yet to infuse the whole with that emotional glow, that electric charge without which a poem fails to come off and be memorable to the reader. I needed a vivid, poignant image to sum up and crystallize the sense of pain and beauty, an image which to carry must be relevant and extracted from the materials at hand. And so, as I refelt the experience and brooded on it there came to me this picture:

Golden birds
With broken wings.

I had done what I set out to do.

Emily Dickinson once said: "If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry." Not meaning to invite comparisons, I confess to a similar stirring of the blood after finishing any piece which keenly satisfies my intentions. This physical recognition, being subjective, is of course no criterion of the poem's ultimate worth or of its impact upon the reader or listener. One can only hope that the desired communication will result.

To repeat, no two poems have the same origin or travel parallel paths in their development. And no two poets have the same approach. The spark which notifies the poet that there's a poem on the way may arise from a chance word, from a thought slowly, persistently germinating, from an intuition defying classification.

I am dealing essentially with lyric poetry. Both the problem and the aspiration of the lyric poet can at least be hinted at in the words of Professor Whicher, biographer of Emily Dickinson:

The lyric . . . lay ready to her hand as the traditional vehicle of impassioned thought. She accepted it as unquestionably as she accepted the alphabet. There were black symbols on white paper, words arranged in rhythmic patterns. How could these dead, mechanical things be made to throb with the high excitement of the soul? How could the living truth be flashed through them from mind to mind?

THEODORE SPENCER *Associate Professor of English and member of the Board of Freshman Advisers at Harvard, Theodore Spencer has steadily acquired an enviable reputation as teacher, critic, and poet. His Lowell Lectures (1941-42), published as Shakespeare and the Nature of Man, are highly regarded. Among his poems "The Alumni" (American Scholar, Winter, 1943-44) will be of interest alike to graduates and those who are beginning "the long grind."*

HOW TO CRITICIZE A POEM

(In the Manner of Certain Contemporary Critics)

I PROPOSE to examine the following poem:

Thirty days hath September,
 April, June and November:
 All the rest have thirty-one,
 Excepting February alone,
 Which has only eight and a score
 Till leap-year gives it one day more.

2

The previous critics who have studied this poem, Coleridge among them, have failed to explain what we may describe as its fundamental *dynamic*. This I now propose to do. The first thing to observe is the order in which the names (or verbal constructs) of the months are presented. According to the prose meaning—what I shall henceforth call the *prose-demand*—"September" should not precede, it should follow "April," as a glance at the calendar will show. Indeed "September" should follow not only "April," it should also follow "June" if the *prose-demand* is to be properly satisfied. The prose order of the first two lines should therefore read: "Thirty days hath April, June, September and November." That is the only sequence consonant with prose logic.

3

Why then, we ask ourselves, did the poet violate what educated readers know to be the facts? Was he ignorant of the calendar, believing that September preceded April in the progress of the seasons? It is difficult to imagine that such was the case. We must find another explanation. It is here that the principle of dynamic analysis comes to our aid.

"How to Criticize a Poem," from *The New Republic*, December 6, 1943. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

4

Dynamic analysis proves that the most successful poetry achieves its effect by producing an *expectation* in the reader's mind before his sensibility is fully prepared to receive the full impact of the poem. The reader makes a *proto-response* which preconditions him to the total response toward which his fully equilibrated organs of apperception subconsciously tend. It is this proto-response which the poet has here so sensitively manipulated. The ordinary reader, trained only to prose-demands, expects the usual order of the months. But the poet's sensibility knows that poetic truth is more immediately effective than the truth of literal chronology. He does not *state* the inevitable sequence; he *prepares* us for it. In his profound analysis of the two varieties of mensural time, he puts the *gentlest* month first. (Notice how the harsh sound of "pt" in "September" is softened by the "e" sound on either side of it.) It is the month in which vegetation first begins to fade, but which does not as yet give us a sense of tragic fatality.

5

Hence the poet prepares us, dynamically, for what is to follow. By beginning his list of the months *in medias res*, he is enabled to return later to the beginning of the series of contrasts which is the subject of his poem. The analogy to the "Oedipus Rex" of Euripides and the "Iliad" of Dante at once becomes clear. Recent criticism has only too often failed to observe that these works also illustrate the dynamic method by beginning in the middle of things. It is a striking fact, hitherto (I believe) unnoticed, that a Latin poem called the "Aeneid" does much the same thing. We expect the author of that poem to begin with the departure of his hero from Troy, just as we expect the author of our poem to begin with "April." But in neither case is our expectation fulfilled. Cato, the author of the "Aeneid," creates dynamic suspense by beginning with Aeneas in Carthage; our anonymous poet treats his readers' sensibilities in a similar fashion by beginning with "September," and then *going back* to "April" and "June."

6

But the sensibility of the poet does not stop at this point. Having described what is true of *four* months, he disposes of *seven* more with masterly economy. In a series of pungent constructs his sensibility sums up their inexorable limitations: they *All* (the capitalization should be noted) "have thirty-one." The poet's sensibility communicates a feeling to the sensibility of the reader so that the sensibility of both, with reference to their previous but independent sensibilities, is fused into that momentary communion of sensibility which is the final sensibility that poetry can give both to the sensibility of the poet and the sensibility of the reader. The texture and structure of the poem have erupted into a major reaction. The ambiguity of equilibrium is achieved.

7

Against these two groups of spatial, temporal and numerical measurements—one consisting of four months, the other of seven—the tragic individual, the sole exception, “February,” is dramatically placed. February is “alone,” is cut off from communion with his fellows. The tragic note is struck the moment “February” is mentioned. For the initial sound of the word “excepting” is “X,” and as that sound strikes the sensibility of the reader’s ear a number of associations subconsciously accumulate. We think of the spot, the murderous and lonely spot, which “X” has so frequently marked; we remember the examinations of our childhood where the wrong answers were implacably signaled with “X”; we think of ex-kings and exile, of lonely crossroads and executions, of the inexorable anonymity of those who cannot sign their names. . . .

8

And yet the poet gives us one ray of hope, though it eventually proves to be illusory. The lonely “February” (notice how the “alone” in line four is echoed by the “only” in line five), the solitary and maladjusted individual who is obviously the hero and crucial figure of the poem, is not condemned to the routine which his fellows, in their different ways, must forever obey. Like Hamlet, he has a capacity for change. He is a symbol of individualism, and the rhythm of the lines which are devoted to him signalizes a gayety, however desperate, which immediately wins our sympathy and reverberates profoundly in our sensibility.

9

But (and this is the illusion to which I have previously referred) in spite of all his variety, his capacity for change, “February” cannot quite accomplish (and in this his tragedy consists) the *quantitative* value of the society in which circumstances have put him. No matter how often he may alternate from twenty-eight to twenty-nine (the poet, with his exquisite sensibility, does not actually *mention* those humiliating numbers), he can never achieve the bourgeois, if anonymous, security of “thirty-one,” nor equal the more modest and aristocratic assurance of “thirty.” Decade after decade, century after century, millennium after millennium, he is eternally frustrated. The only symbol of change in a changeless society, he is continually beaten down. Once every four years he tries to rise, to achieve the high, if delusive, level of his dreams. But he fails. He is always one day short, and the three years before the recurrence of his next effort are a sad interval in which the remembrance of previous disappointment melts into the futility of hope, only to sink back once more into the frustration of despair. Like Tantalus he is forever stretched upon a wheel.

IO

So far I have been concerned chiefly with the dynamic *analysis* of the poem. Further study should reveal the *synthesis* which can be made on the basis of the analysis which my thesis has tentatively attempted to bring to an emphasis. This, perhaps, the reader with a proper sensibility can achieve for himself.

MONA GARDNER *After graduating from Stanford, Mona Gardner began writing for newspapers in San Francisco and Los Angeles, and then spent a number of years in the Orient, contributing articles to American and English newspapers. She has published one book, The Menacing Sun.*

FARMING FOR FUR

E-g-g-s used to spell pin money for the suburban wife. Today *c-h-i-n-c-h-i-l-l-a* is the de luxe way of spelling it. Only, instead of yielding pennies for the bank on the kitchen shelf, this new farming has been known to pay for the farm itself, since two young chinchillas bring as much as \$3200 and three litters a year are not unusual.

Ten years ago, raising these exotic rodents in captivity was practically unheard of. This year something like six thousand of the lustrous, downy-furred little beasts are placidly—and economically—munching corn and alfalfa on lowland and upland farms here and there in the United States. One woman is even raising a pair in a penthouse twenty floors above New York City.

And, by these tokens, more than one mother calculates that by the time her daughter is a debutante—say in early 1955—a flattering chinchilla coat will be in the mink price range. Today a full-length *new* chinchilla wrap costs in the neighborhood of \$60,000. Some furriers quote \$85,000, *if and when* they can assemble the pelts.

Chinchilla has been an “oh-may-I-touch-it-just-once” fur only since 1918. Before that, especially back around the turn of the century, it was just another fur. Made up into chunky tippets and muffs, it was the sort of thing an indulgent uncle gave his well-bred young niece when she got to the leggy age.

But suddenly, in 1918, Peru, Chile, and Bolivia put a frantic and decisive ban on its export. High up in the snowy Andean provinces of these three countries, where the chinchilla made its home, the tiny twenty-ounce creatures were almost extinct. And when they became extinct in the Andes they would be extinct in the world, biologists said, for chinchilla is purely the South Amer-

“Farming for Fur,” from *The Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1941. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

ican version of a squirrel. Its size and shape are those of a squirrel; so are its ears and eyes and tail. But the fur—well, to say it is the finest animal fibre in the world is a bald way of describing incredibly soft spider-web tendrils that spread a black veil over dawn-gray down.

Ruthless trapping had led to this near extinction. From 1895 to 1910, the pelts exported from Chile alone averaged about 300,000 annually. In 1899 these Chilean exports reached an all-time peak of 435,000. Naturally, by the time 1918 rolled around, it was taking the Indian hunters a year to bring back the bag they had formerly obtained in a week.

Meanwhile in Chile, it seems, there were numerous Englishmen engineering for English companies. After hours and on week-ends they were homesick. And, as homesick men of England will do anywhere they go on the globe, they brought a bit of England to South America. In this case it was long-legged hunters, hounds, and European red foxes, to set up the institution of fox-hunting.

What the Englishmen didn't foresee—nor did anyone else, for that matter—was that the alien vixen and her litters would like nothing so much in the way of food as a tidbit of chinchilla along about midnight. The result was that the immigrant fox thrived and multiplied in vast numbers during the next few years, while the chinchilla disappeared, completely in some districts.

The species being raised in this country are Costinas, and the first ones were brought here in 1923 by an American mining engineer, M. F. Chapman. But it wasn't as simple as that sounds.

In the first place, it took twenty-three native trappers, working from camps 17,000 feet high, a full three years to capture eighteen of the nocturnal creatures alive. Then there was the matter of inventing a cage (since there were no models) which would approximate a rocky burrow and into which enough ice could be stuffed to maintain the chilly temperatures of the Andes.

This, it seems, was all preliminary to the matter of acclimatizing the midget animals to lower altitudes. It was done by stages—one or two thousand feet at a time, and a month, perhaps, spent at each stage. This stretched into another year before they were at sea level.

During all this time, too, there was the matter of diet—learning that the friendly but timid little creatures were entirely vegetarian and that any moisture was fatal to them. Starting out from the high reaches with eighteen chinchillas, using a great deal of ice and keeping electric fans blowing on the cage twenty-four hours a day, Mr. Chapman finally reached Los Angeles with eleven, only four of which were females.

The original farm at Inglewood, California, to which Mr. Chapman brought his chinchillas, is now chinchilla headquarters in the United States. From this mother colony breeding pairs have been purchased to set up some thirty other substantial chinchilla stock farms in Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Kentucky, and New York.

Until three years ago none of the Chapman animals were killed for their pelts. They were considered too valuable as breeders. A pelt (about twelve

by eight inches) in the present market brings anywhere from \$85 to \$250. A live chinchilla sells for \$1600.

Mr. Chapman's worries weren't over, though, when he landed his odd cargo in California in February. There was a still more difficult task of acclimatization ahead in realigning the lives of the chinchillas with the calendar of the North Temperate Zone. In February the chinchillas were just putting on their heavy coat in preparation for an Andean winter. By May, when the days in California get really hot, the chinchillas were fully dressed for subzero weather.

The tiny beasts were miserable. Ice was piled in the cages. But the chinchillas continued to lose interest in eating and, what was more alarming, all interest in sex life. By the time cool weather rolled around, the little animals began to moult. Precious fur that was worth three times its weight in gold came off in large chunks. Then, instead of ice and electric fans, blankets and hot-water bottles were called in for the shivering and naked little bodies.

Somehow they got through that winter, and by the spring of 1924 there were babies frisking about the pen. No more than two inches long, they weighed about one and a half ounces apiece.

All this while Mr. Chapman was experimenting with food and houses. He knew that, despite their delicate fur, the chinchillas were extremely hardy little beasts. The Indian who had brought the first one to him had put it in an old oil can and carried it over his shoulder for seventeen days, without water and with little food, in altitudes varying from 11,000 to 17,000 feet. In other words, the animal had survived in the can which was an oven in the daytime and a refrigerator at night, in varying altitudes, and with the minimum of food.

The trial-and-error method was the one used in the early experiments. Since the chinchillas in their native habitat live on rocky ground, on cliffs and hill-sides, or on high plateaus where shrubs grow sparsely and the ground is soft enough for burrowing, it was assumed that they would do best in captivity if they were allowed to burrow. Chapman dug burrows in the California hillside. That idea was no good. The chinchillas would have none of the burrows, huddling outside them in a disturbed manner.

Exactly a dozen different kinds of houses were tried out. Only the last one proved workable, and, ironically enough, it is the simplest of the lot. It is a pen four feet by six by six, with a flooring and roof of oven-dried timber. All four sides are screened and open to the fresh air. In the centre there is a small timbered nest, with a sort of covered runway and hinged trapdoor. Apparently this is all that is needed to satisfy the chinchillas' burrowing instincts, which, after all, may have been no more than a desire for privacy.

Hitting upon a balanced diet was achieved in much the same manner as the best housing arrangements were discovered—by copious experimentation and detailed observation over a period of years. To confirm his own findings, Chapman took several pairs to St. Louis to the Ralston-Purina Company, which puts out the prepared foods largely responsible for the high standard of silver-fox and mink pelts raised in captivity.

Between Mr. Chapman and the food specialists a mixture has been worked

out which seems to take care of all food requirements. This mixture includes such items as irradiated yeast, molasses, wheat germ, oat middlings, beet pulp, peanut-oil meal, brewers' dried yeast, soybean-oil meal, corn-meal germ, yellow corn meal, chopped alfalfa, bone meal, and mineralized salt.

The list sounds overwhelming for such tiny animals, but they consume no more than two ounces of the mixture a day. Supplementing it are carrots three times a week and orange juice on alternate days. Two dollars a year buys everything a chinchilla can eat.

Chinchillas are monogamists. Once mated, they remain so for life. To maintain domestic peace, each pair is housed in a separate pen. The mating season for those in captivity is not restricted to any season. Young have been born every month of the year. The mild California climate and a liberal quantity of fertility vitamin E in the diet have considerably stepped up the matings; two and three a year are usual now. Babies in a litter vary from one to four. A few quintuplets have been born, but the average is two.

The gestation period lasts 111 days, rarely longer. During this period the pregnant mother is fed some greens and lettuce, and about ten days before whelping an electric bulb encased in aluminum is turned on under the nest to provide a slight heat until a few days after the young are born. An hour after birth the one-and-a-half-ounce babies are up and doing for themselves. They are fully furred and their eyes are open, although, like their parents, they can only see things at night.

During the forty-five days the mother nurses the young, the father leaves her side only at short intervals. The babies are never left alone. When the mother goes out of the nest to the food dish, the father takes her place with the babies. Although the babies are weaned at forty-five days, the parents do not consider them mature enough to fend for themselves. For another thirty days they are tended and pampered.

At the end of this seventy-five-day period, however, the young are separated and put into pens with chinchillas from other litters. Great care is taken to prevent inbreeding, and brothers and sisters, even first cousins, are no longer placed together. Once together, the young chinchillas indulge in a considerable period of courtship, which seems to be a definite part of their scheme of things. Then, when they are anywhere from five to eight months old, they mate. Usually the first litter is born before the female is a year old. Her bearing span is eight to ten years, and during that time she produces constantly.

Next to karakul sheep (the Persian variety now being bred so successfully on ranches in the Southwest), chinchillas are the least laborious of all stock on fur farms. They are never nervous and high-strung like the fox and the mink, nor are they subject to pulmonary diseases. Although somewhat timid, they are docile and very friendly, as easily handled as pet rabbits.

They seldom bite humans, but they are inveterate snake-killers. The snakes, lured by the prospect of what they evidently take to be fat mice, find themselves no match for the incredible speed of the chinchilla.

On all the large farms there are charts, like those outside hospital rooms, which hang on each pen. Keepers check four important points each day and

make their notations accordingly. First of all, the keepers look to see whether the large ears are standing up erect and perky, as they should if all is well. Then the beady eyes tell their story: they should not be watery. The tail is the next indicator, and always curves in a bushy arch when vitality is high. Last of all, the droppings tell the state of gastro-intestinal health.

The present stock is approximately twenty-nine generations from the original Costinas brought from Chile. Each is tattooed, however, for identification and has its complete pedigree. The animals are sold with a veterinarian's certificate of health and are guaranteed to litter within six months or they are replaced with another pair, which have littered within that period, and with one of the young of this last litter.

The purchase price also entitles the new owner to bulletins on chinchilla care and forthcoming data on future experiments.

The quality of the fur raised in this country is exquisite. It far surpasses that of the wild chinchilla. One factor is the rancher's ability to pelt when fur is at its thickest, what the furriers call No. 1 Prime. This is in February. No wild skin was ever taken in its prime because the native trappers didn't have the feet or the stomach to go up 17,000 feet after chinchilla during the fierce and bleak Andean winter. Instead, they took skins in midsummer when the fur was thinner and the hide weaker.

It has been found that the fur is not so dense on animals raised in coastal and lowland regions. Three to six months in a cold climate, however, will put on a long and lustrous coat that is more like down than fur. Since the warm Southern climates noticeably stimulate breeding activity and interfere in no way with health, chinchilla farmers are talking about a future that is not very far off, according to them, when there will be breeding farms at one altitude and pelting farms at another.

Killing is done with a monoxide gas which puts the animals to sleep quite painlessly and doesn't injure the fur in any way.

The first pelting of the captive chinchilla was done three years ago at the Chapman farm. This pelting was a little early, according to Reginald Chapman, son of the founder, but it was done to show furriers the exquisite texture of the home-grown chinchilla.

Like orchid raisers and diamond miners, the present group of chinchilla farmers have no intention of glutting the market with this precious fur. They distinctly do not anticipate a day when it will be an ordinary fur any more than the ranch-raised mink or the silver fox is. Nearly 99 per cent of the silver fox is raised in captivity, and it is not exactly cheap. Mink comes from more than a thousand mink farms about the country, and yet the price of a mink coat isn't confused with that of rabbit. So, even with chinchilla a new and flourishing industry, the chances are that you'll never get a coat of it at bargain-counter prices.

2. *Analyses*

J. B. S. HALDANE *Two provocative monographs* (Daedalus, 1924, and Callinicus, 1925) introduced J. B. S. Haldane (b. 1892) to the general public as one of a group of contemporary scientists who have done so much, not only to make science intelligible to the layman, but also to interpret the impact of science upon thought and behavior. Professor of Biochemistry at University College, London, since 1937, he has written a number of books whose titles reflect this broad interest: *Possible Worlds* (1927); *The Inequality of Man* (1932); *The Causes of Evolution* (1938); *Heredity and Politics* (1938); and *Science and Everyday Life* (1939).

SCIENCE AND ETHICS

SCIENCE impinges upon ethics in at least five different ways. In the first place, by its application it creates new ethical situations. Two hundred years ago the news of a famine in China created no duty for Englishmen. They could take no possible action against it. Today the telegraph and the steam-engine have made such action possible, and it becomes an ethical problem what action, if any, is right. Two hundred years ago a workman generally owned his own tools. Now his tool may be a crane or steam-hammer, and we all have our own views as to whether these should belong to shareholders, the State, or guilds representing the workers.

Secondly, it may create new duties by pointing out previously unexpected consequences of our actions. We are all agreed that we should not run the risk of spreading typhoid by polluting the public water supply. We are probably divided as to the duty of vaccinating our children, and we may not all be of one mind as to whether a person likely to transmit club-foot or cataract to half his or her children should be compelled to abstain from parenthood.

Thirdly, science affects our whole ethical outlook by influencing our views as to the nature of the world—in fact, by supplanting mythology. One man may see men and animals as a great brotherhood of common ancestry, and thus feel an enlargement of his obligations. Another will regard even the noblest aspects of human nature as products of a ruthless struggle for existence, and thus justify a refusal to assist the weak and suffering. A third, impressed

"Science and Ethics," from *Science and Human Life* by J. B. S. Haldane. Published by Harper & Brothers.

with the vanity of human efforts amid the vast indifference of the universe, will take refuge in a modified epicureanism. In all these attitudes and in many others there is at least some element of rightness.

Fourthly, in so far as anthropology is becoming scientific, it is bound to have a profound effect on ethics by showing that any given ethical code is only one of a number practised with equal conviction and almost equal success; in fact, by creating comparative ethics. But, of course, any serious study of the habits of foreigners, whether scientific or not, has this effect, as comes out plainly enough in the history of ancient Greek ethics. Hence science is not wholly responsible for the ethical results of anthropology.

Finally, ethics may be profoundly affected by an adoption of the scientific point of view; that is to say, the attitude which men of science, in their professional capacity, adopt towards the world. This attitude includes a high (perhaps an unduly high) regard for truth, and a refusal to come to unjustifiable conclusions which expresses itself on the plane of religion as agnosticism. And along with this is found a deliberate suppression of emotion until the last possible moment, on the ground that emotion is a stumbling-block on the road to truth. So a rose and a tape-worm must be studied by the same methods and viewed from the same angle, even if the work is ultimately to lead to the killing of the tape-worms and the propagation of roses. Again, the scientific point of view involves the cultivation of a scientific esthetic which rejoices in the peculiar forms of beauty which characterize scientific theory. Those who find an intimate relation between the good and the beautiful will realize the importance of the fact that a group of men so influential as scientific workers are pursuing a particular kind of beauty. Finally, since the scientist, as such, is contributing to an intellectual structure that belongs to humanity as a whole, his influence will inevitably fall in favour of ethical principles and practices which transcend the limits of nation, colour, and class.

Personally, I believe that the second of these relationships between science and ethics is that in which science is most beneficial. By complicating life science creates new opportunities of wrong-doing; by altering our world-view it may lead us into one form or another of ethical nihilism: it can never do us harm by pointing out to us the consequences of our actions. But the enemies of science will claim that, just because at present, insofar as it concerns itself with human beings, it deals with their bodies rather than their souls, it will lead us to neglect the higher forms of duty to our neighbour. On the whole, I accept this indictment, and glory in it; although, since I do not believe in a detachable soul, I regard the good of the body as the good of the soul too, each being the whole man looked at from a particular point of view. But I welcome this apparent debasement of ethical aims for another reason.

As long as my services to my neighbour are confined to feeding him when hungry, or helping him to raise his wages, and tending him when sick or preventing future sickness, and so forth, I am probably following the Golden Rule, for I do not want to be hungry, poor, or sick, and few of my neighbours are good enough Christians to do so. But if I soar above the mere claims of the body I shall try to educate my neighbour against his will, convert him

to my particular brand of religion or irreligion, or even to psycho-analyse him. As I do not personally want to admire Gertrude Stein, worship a biscuit, or remember the moral lapses of my infancy, these forms of charity are very liable to be breaches of the Golden Rule; and if they are carried too far they may well develop into missions to the heathen or even crusades.

I confess that I am not appalled at the thought of an ethical system in which the only goods with which we attempted to provide our neighbours were of the most material character, and in which hygiene took the place of salvation. So much nonsense is put about in the name of hygiene that the idea is naturally repugnant to many people. For hygiene has furnished a new weapon to the numerous persons who desire either to interfere with the lives of their fellows or to exploit their fears. As religion declines, the man who would have sold relics in the past turns his attention to pills, and the belief in the danger of Sabbath-breaking is replaced by that in the danger of bad smells, although tanners and glue-boilers are healthier than the average of the population.

In view of such facts it requires considerable education to preserve one's health; and since the education in question is biological, and I am a biologist, it is natural that I should like to see it universally diffused. If the great aim of education is to know yourself, it is essential to begin at the beginning—namely, with anatomy and physiology. If an almost equally important aim is to promote human solidarity, it is in the realm of hygiene that this is most completely displayed. On the political and economic plane my neighbours' misfortune may be my advantage; in that of hygiene this is never so, as Carlyle pointed out long ago. As long as we maintain slums and dusty occupations we shall have foci from which the tubercle bacillus can attack the well-to-do. As long as we have families of six in a single room we shall be unable to prevent the spread of diphtheria or measles. This solidarity against pathogenic micro-organisms extends beyond the boundaries of nationality, race, or even species. Every Roumanian infected with infantile paralysis, every Indian with small-pox, every rat with plague, diminishes the probable length of my life. The pessimistic psychologists tell us that men can be combined in large numbers only by hate and fear. As long as a single infectious disease remains in existence there will be suitable objects of hatred and fear for humanity as a whole. I am not a materialist, but I do not think that the influence of materialism on ethics is wholly bad. Not only does it banish many imaginary goods and evils, but it calls attention to a case where egoism and altruism are the same. And a materialistic criterion, such as health, has the immense advantage over a hedonistic one such as happiness that the health of two men can be compared, while their happiness cannot.

LOUIS UNTERMAYER *Most professors and students of English and American poetry know well the name of Louis*
 CARTER DAVIDSON *Untermeyer, thanks to the many volumes of his own poems and the many anthologies of poetry edited by him. Born in New York City in 1885, he later received training in music, but left high school to enter his father's jewelry business. Since 1923, however, he has devoted his time exclusively to writing, editing, and lecturing. At one time (1934-37) Untermeyer was poetry editor of the American Mercury. For a full autobiography see his Modern American Poetry and Modern British Poetry (Harcourt, Brace, 1942). Recognized as a poet of importance, Untermeyer is without peer as a successful collector and commentator, as his many volumes amply demonstrate. Carter Davidson, collaborator with Untermeyer in the writing of Poetry: Its Appreciation and Enjoyment (1934)—"a cross between a treatise and a textbook"—was born in Kentucky in 1905 and educated at Harvard and Chicago. After various college teaching appointments he finally settled at Carleton College, where from 1931 to 1936 he was a professor of English and assistant to the president. An ordained Congregational minister, Dr. Davidson has been, since 1936, President of Knox College.*

THE PREJUDICE AGAINST POETRY

NO ART is more closely related to man than poetry—and none has been so variously interpreted. It was regarded with reverence by primitive people, honored by the folk as well as by the sages throughout antiquity, quoted by peasants and beloved by the cultured in every civilization. It is only in our own time and in our own country that poetry is suspected. Lord Bacon considered the art nothing less than "divine" since "it raises the mind and hurries it into sublimity by conforming the show of things to the desires of the soul, instead of subjecting the soul to external things, as reason and history do." Yet the average man in America believes that poetry is not so much a sacred as a secret art, an abracadabra practiced and enjoyed only by the verbal magicians who are suspiciously expert in the craft. "Poetry is for poets," says the man in the street, with a sneer he does not trouble to disguise. "It has its place, I suppose, but personally," he adds, in cheerful dismissal, "I'm prejudiced against that sort of thing."

Although we do not need to justify poetry we must recognize such prejudice, the more so since it seems to be prevalent in these States. The prejudice is as paradoxical as it is inconsistent. It did not exist in Greece, where the poet was venerated as dramatist and spokesman-priest; nor in Rome, where the Caesars vied with the singers; nor in the Middle Ages, wherein no court was complete without its local laureate, no castle worthy of the name that did not

"The Prejudice Against Poetry," from *Poetry: Its Appreciation and Enjoyment* by Louis Untermeyer and Carter Davidson, copyright, 1934, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

house a troubadour or minnesinger. The prejudice is not native to the Orient, where people think the composing of poetry so natural an accomplishment that they improvise verses freely and seldom bother to sign their names to written poems; nor is it found in modern Europe, where the poems of Heine and Béranger and Carducci have become the folk-songs of unlettered multitudes. The prejudice against poetry is chiefly an Anglo-Saxon innovation, which appears most commonly in the form of three complaints: (1) Poetry is abnormal; (2) it is forbiddingly "highbrow" and "meaningless"; (3) it is effeminate. Let us examine these charges.

First prejudice: Poetry is abnormal. Of all the common misconceptions of poetry this is the most prevalent and the most discouraging: the notion that poetry is the creation of abnormal, neurotic or absurd creatures and requires similarly abnormal and neurotic natures to respond to it. The comic weekly cartoon indicates that the poet, next to the mother-in-law, is the surest material for a laugh: the poor fellow is usually shown long of hair and short of cash, hollow-eyed, unkempt, unaware of reality, gazing at the moon and jotting down precious phrases on a frayed cuff or in an equally shabby note-book. He is pictured wandering in space and time, oblivious to every ordinary activity, something like a fallen angel and something like a jackass. It has been remarked that a poet in the last century is picturesque, but a poet in the next apartment is a nuisance.

Undoubtedly there have been eccentrics in literature, but no profession is free of them. Emotional intensity and imaginative power sometimes set the poet apart from his fellow-man, but these gifts make him more, not less, able to feel, share, and express the common or unusual experiences of others. "There is no gap," says I. A. Richards, "between our everyday emotional life and the material of poetry. . . . We cannot avoid the material of poetry. If we do not live in consonance with good poetry, we must live in consonance with bad poetry. In fact, the idle hours of most lives are filled with reveries that are simply bad poetry." Man does not live by bread alone; Emerson went further than the Bible and maintained that he lived not only by poetry but through its agency. "See the power of national emblems. Some stars, lilies, leopards, a crescent, a lion, an eagle or other figure which came into credit God knows how, an old rag of bunting blowing in the wind . . . shall make the blood tingle under the rudest or most conventional exterior. The people fancy they hate poetry—and they are all poets and mystics! . . . For we are not pans and barrows, nor even porters of the fire and torch-bearers, but children of the fire, made of it, and only the same divinity transmuted."

Even the writing of poetry is by no means as uncommon as the prejudiced mind would have us believe. As an activity, far from being "abnormal," it is the most practiced of pursuits. It may be prompted by the stirrings of first love or by the shock of tragedy, or by the thrill of some unforeseen event, but the person whose pulse has never quickened into rapture and whose pen has never hurried into rhyme is the exception to the norm. An examination of the amount of verse printed in America alone in the twenty years between 1912 and 1932 reveals that approximately 40,000 poets have achieved publication

and probably ten times that number have written without attaining the distinction of print—all within one generation. The prejudice against poetry in America is, therefore, doubly inconsistent since never before have the people of these States been so ready to express themselves in rhythm and adequate rhyme.

Second prejudice: Poetry is forbiddingly "highbrow" and often "meaningless." The charge, in other words, is (a) that poetry says too much, and (b) that it has nothing to say. Apart from the inconsistency of the complaint, the prejudice is stretched to include rhyme in all its manifestations. It is, according to certain detractors, a pleasant tinkle of pretty syllables, a kind of musical soothing-syrup, an erudite conjuring trick for the highly cultivated. Yet it is obvious that the lowest "lowbrow" enjoys rhyme for its own sake—as may be proved by the hundreds of thousands who have chuckled at the dexterity of the verses in the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. It is relished by all who have made up or memorized limericks—the very point of these being the oddity of the rhyming—by all who have repeated the words of the latest popular song. Poetry has always been the easiest, not the hardest, form to remember. Primitive legends and laws were transmitted in rhythmic form. Not only the Psalms but the Mosaic injunctions were written in Hebrew poetry. In childhood the memorization of names, dates, and other prosaic facts has commonly been speeded up and permanently retained by being cast in rhyme. Even the supposedly anti-poetic Puritans combined religion and verse; the very alphabet was rhymed in *The New England Primer*: "In Adam's fall We sinnéd all," "Thy life to mend This Book attend," "The Cat doth play And after slay" . . . and so on until "Youth forward slips Death soonest nips" and "Zaccheus he Did climb the tree His Lord to see." And who has not learned the days of the month by remembering that

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November . . . ?

The most casual reading of poetry will convince the skeptical that verse demands no special apparatus for its enjoyment and that in compensation for the occasional difficulties there are infinite rewards. Instead of being insufferably "intellectual" and incomprehensible, poetry has always expressed man's simplest as well as his most complicated emotions. William Hazlitt insists that "man is a poetical animal; and those of us who do not study the principles of poetry, act upon them all our lives—like Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, who had always spoken prose 'without knowing it.' The child is a poet in fact when he first plays at hide-and-seek or repeats the story of Jack the Giant-killer; the shepherd-boy is a poet when he first crowns his mistress with a garland of flowers . . . the miser when he hugs his gold; the courtier who builds his hopes upon a smile; the slave who worships a tyrant, or the tyrant who fancies himself a god—the vain, the ambitious, the proud, the choleric, the hero and the coward, the rich and poor, the young and the old, all live in a world of their own making; and the poet does no more than describe what all the others think and act." Even though one might not be willing to be as inclusive

as Hazlitt, one must recognize that poetry is not merely a "precious" speech confined to a few specialists, but a "universal language which the heart holds with nature and itself. He who has a contempt for poetry cannot have much respect for himself or anything else."

The "meaninglessness" of poetry is another false idea which has led thousands away from the perusal and appreciation of verse. Those prejudiced against it are willing to concede that poetry possesses a certain beauty of form, even a certain charm of music, but they contend it carries no significant message. "If I want to find facts I read the newspaper," says one. "I never look for truth in poetry; I consult the encyclopedia." This is to confuse the outer form with the inner spirit, to mistake the "fact" for the "truth." Data on unemployment may well be given in a statistical account; reaction of the heart to the terror and tragedy of unemployment is the material of poetry. To confuse "fact" and "truth" is to lose sight of the very function of poetry, for poetry has always sought to reach and reflect the deepest emotions, the intensities, the spiritual values, which the newspaper evades and the encyclopedia, for all its thoroughness, cannot express. The greatest truths of human existence have found their most powerful projections in poetry: the histories of great people in their epics and sagas; world religions in hymns and vedas, in a Dante's *Divine Comedy* and a Goethe's *Faust*; philosophic systems in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* and in the poems of Blake, Wordsworth, and Arnold. It must also be remembered that emotions are as "significant" as facts or ideas in determining human conduct—and poetry has proved itself to be, first of all, the language of the emotions.

Third prejudice: Poetry is effeminate. This is the commonest—and, seemingly, the most devastating—barrier erected between poetry and the average reader. It is an obstacle which is hard to overcome, for it has never been completely demolished since the time of the hardy men who hacked their way into the country. America was settled by those who sought freedom rather than beauty. Life on a savage continent demanded a communal purpose; conditions called for action, not for contemplative dreams. The pioneer had no time for art. His energies were consumed in clearing forests, fighting Indians, building stockades, and protecting his cabins. Isolation, lack of luxuries and distance from large centres stimulated the crafts, but crippled the creative impulses which depend on a measure of meditation. In a life struggling against difficulties, devoted to physical activity, poetry seemed an irrelevance, almost an impertinence.

Although there is little left to win from savagery, although the last frontier has been charted and the log cabin amplified to the one hundred and two stories of the Empire State Building, the pioneering impulse still persists, carrying with it a contempt for art. The prejudice against poetry, a prejudice both superficial and absurd, remains like a ghost which has never been laid.

The "feminine" aspect of poetry is part of this ghostlike past. The characterization was invented by the illiterate or merely muscular who thought all form of meditation was, somehow, effeminate. The application of the term is usually as foolish as it is false.

If poetry—and, for that matter, any of the creative arts—were not a masculine business, it would follow that Art has been practiced largely, if not chiefly, by women. But the opposite is the case. However one may explain it—on the basis of lack of opportunity or of economic necessity—the fact remains that, though woman may be fundamentally a creator, man has been the creative artist. With the rare exception of an occasional Sappho, an Emily Dickinson or an Emily Brontë, history shows an extraordinary lack of women as composers, sculptors, playwrights, painters or poets of the first rank. Even in the chief branch of literature in which they have attained excellence—the writing of love-lyrics—they have been surpassed and outnumbered by men in the proportion of a hundred to one. Poetry, then, is not only a masculine occupation, but an especially manly one.

Yet, as L. A. G. Strong points out,¹ “When a poet somehow becomes news, the papers are at pains to state that he wears his hair short and enjoys his beer. They would not feel the necessity of thus assuring their readers if he were a doctor or a chartered accountant.” The real poets have always been real men, not falsetto posturers; they have been men of vigor and varied accomplishments. The roll-call of the greatest would include men who have shaped the world’s affairs as well as its letters. David the Psalmist was no less a warrior for being a poet, greater even than the unpoetic and “practical” Saul. Solomon, reputed the author of the most passionate love-poem ever written, was also reputed the wisest of rulers. Plato was not only a philosopher but a lyric poet and an excellent amateur wrestler. When Caesar Augustus sought intelligent companions he invited the pastoral poet Virgil to grace his board and, during his campaigns, often sent couriers to the poet, imploring him to despatch another canto of the Aeneid to cheer him during long sieges. The worldly Maecenas selected Horace, a writer of odes, for his closest associate. Dante was known to his fellows not only as the first poet of his times, but as an outstanding Florentine envoy. The turbulent Michelangelo hacked his way through stone, flung up cathedral domes, painted like a Titan, and composed sonnets as self-revealing as his sculpture. Chaucer, “the father of English poesy,” acted as confidential ambassador and diplomat from England to France. Sir Walter Raleigh, courtier and soldier-of-fortune, never ceased to write poetry and chose that medium for his last message. Christopher Marlowe fulfilled the swash-buckler tradition of the Elizabethan period by his furious imagination and by “dying swearing,” stabbed to death in a tavern brawl. Shakespeare, the world’s incomparable poet-playwright, was in addition a shrewd enough business man to settle down in his home town at the height of his career, as Stratford-on-Avon’s respectable landowner and distinguished citizen. Ben Jonson, a man’s man to the last drop of his hot blood, spent his youth as a bricklayer, his young manhood as a swaggering duellist, and his old age in almost continuous talking and tippling. When Cromwell sought a Secretary of Foreign Affairs he found his man in the Puritan poet, John Milton. John Lyly, Henry Vaughan, George Crabbe, Mark Akenside, and Oliver Goldsmith were prac-

¹ In *Common Sense About Poetry*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1932.

ting physicians while at work upon their most memorable lines. Perhaps the most efficiently governed of German principalities in the early nineteenth century was the Duchy of Weimar, where the prime minister was Goethe. Robert Burns was a farmer. Whittier was, by turns, a chore-boy, cobbler, and a fiery anti-slavery pamphleteer. William Morris wrote his epical narratives while designing new fonts of type, making furniture, and revolutionizing interior decorating.

Thus the history of literature refutes the misconception of the poet as a feather-brained and unmanly incompetent. The present reinforces the past: John Masefield, poet laureate of England, spent his formative years as an able seaman with an episode as barkeeper's assistant in Greenwich Village. W. H. Davies, the most "bird-like" of living lyricists, was a cattleman, a berry-picker, a day-laborer, a "super-tramp," until his foot was cut off when he rode the rails in Canada. His compatriot, Ralph Hodgson, one of the purest voices of this age, is known as a writer to only a few, whereas every sportsman in England recognizes him as a famous dog-fancier and authority on boxing. Robert Frost was employed in the Massachusetts mills as a bobbin-boy and worked many years as a farmer in New Hampshire before his first book was published when he was nearly forty. Edgar Lee Masters, an Illinois lawyer, brought to his *Spoon River Anthology* a power of analysis rare even in the tensest courtroom. Carl Sandburg's illumination of industrial America came directly out of his experiences as harvest-hand, dish-washer, porter in a barber-shop and truck-handler. Siegfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, Wilfred Owen, Robert Graves, Alan Seeger, and Joyce Kilmer must be added to the great list of soldier-poets. . . . "I think," wrote Sir Philip Sidney, one of the bravest and most honorable fighters in the field, "and I think rightly, the laurel crown appointed for triumphant captains doth worthily, of all other learnings, honor the poet's triumph."

If poetry were the expression of abnormal, neurotic, and childish reflections of life, it could hardly appeal to those who have appreciated it most fervently: the highly civilized and mature Greeks of Periclean Athens; the old Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon warriors who listened far into the night to the creations of their scopas and gleemen; the world-conquerors of Queen Bess's England who were thrilled by a sonnet and excited by a poetic drama; the cowboys and lumberjacks of America who still spend the long watches of the dark singing ballads with plebeian pasts or royal pedigrees. The more richly human and experienced the reader, the more he will appreciate the work of his poetic fellows. For—and it cannot be repeated too often—poetry is a human activity, not only reflecting human activities, but powerfully affecting them.

THE POETS
(from "Ode")

We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;

World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
 We built up the world's great cities,
 And out of a fabulous story
 We fashion an empire's glory:
 One man with a dream, at pleasure,
 Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
 And three with a new song's measure
 Can trample an empire down.

We, in the ages lying
 In the buried past of the earth,
 Built Nineveh with our sighing,
 And Babel itself with our mirth;
 And o'erthrew them with prophesying
 To the old of the new world's worth;
 For each age is a dream that is dying,
 Or one that is coming to birth.
 —Arthur O'Shaughnessy (1844-1881)

PRECIOUS WORDS

He ate and drank the precious words.
 His spirit grew robust;
 He knew no more that he was poor,
 Nor that his frame was dust.

He danced along the dingy days,
 And this bequest of wings
 Was but a book. What liberty
 A loosened spirit brings!
 —Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

WILLIAM MOULTON MARSTON (*b. 1893*) was admitted to the bar in 1918 after earlier receiving a Harvard Ph.D. degree. There followed a series of miscellaneous and important positions as psychologist, professor, consultant in legal psychology, etc., and various employers—the movie industry, clinics, the advertising profession, and newspaper syndicates. He is known for his books (*Emotions of Normal People*), his pioneer work in “lie detector” tests, and amusingly enough, his own comic strip (“Wonder Woman”), which he established on psychological principles to prove his own notions about people. In an age when the comics are so important that the Mayor of New York City felt called upon to read them over the radio during a 1945 newspaper strike, anything Mr. Marston has to say on the subject ought to be of great interest.

WHY 100,000,000 AMERICANS READ COMICS

AMERICAN literature has reached in the present day “comics” or adventure strip a zenith of popularity never before achieved in world history by any form of reading matter. Eighteen million comics magazines are sold on the newsstands every month. Since, according to competent surveys, four or five persons read each magazine, we reach the startling total of 70,000,000 or more monthly readers. Research indicates that nearly half these readers are adults.

But monthly comic magazine sales represent only the cream of the story-strip crop. Approximately 1,500,000,000 copies of four- or five-panel comic

“Why 100,000,000 Americans Read Comics.” Reprinted with permission from *The American Scholar*, Winter, 1943-44.

strips are circulated every week in the daily newspapers. Only two of the nation's 2,300 sizable dailies—the *New York Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor*—are without comics. On Sunday morning some 40,600,000 children read 2,500,000,000 comic strips in more than 50,000,000 comic sections of Sunday newspapers, with far greater concentration than the progeny of our Puritan ancestors read the Bible. If some unlucky youngsters can't get the funnies away from Dad, or if the younger children can't read the captions and can't get Mommie to read them, they turn on the radio and listen to Uncle Don and other professional story-strip readers who broadcast the leading week-end comics features. To be sure, on weekdays it is very tiresome for millions of youngsters to wait until Father brings home the evening paper—so every day several comics continuities are dramatized on the radio. Then, too, at the movies the children see Blondie, Superman, Batman, and other story-strip dramas on the screen. And almost certainly they will see a Walt Disney or some similar animated animal cartoon every time they visit the cinema. The comics have become a seven-day, morning-afternoon-and-evening mental diet for a vast majority of Americans. One hundred million is a very conservative estimate of the total number of men, women, and children who habitually read story strips in the United States today.

This phenomenal development of a national comics addiction puzzles professional educators and leaves the literary critics gasping. Comics, they say, are not literature—adventure strips lack artistic form, mental substance, and emotional appeal to any but the most moronic of minds. Can it be that 100,000,000 Americans are morons? Possibly so; but there seems to be a simpler explanation. Nine humans out of ten react first with their feelings rather than with their minds; the more primitive the emotion stimulated, the stronger the reaction. Comics play a trite but lusty tune on the C natural keys of human nature. They rouse the most primitive, but also the most powerful, reverberations in the noisy cranial sound-box of consciousness, drowning out more subtle symphonies. Comics scorn finesse, thereby incurring the wrath of linguistic adepts. They defy the limits of accepted fact and convention, thus amortizing to apoplexy the ossified arteries of routine thought. But by these very tokens the picture-story fantasy cuts loose the hampering debris of art and artifice and touches the tender spots of universal human desires and aspirations, hidden customarily beneath long accumulated protective coverings of indirection and disguise. Comics speak, without qualm or sophistication, to the innermost ears of the wishful self. The response is like that of a thirsty traveler who suddenly finds water in the desert—he drinks to satiation.

Strange as it may seem, it is the *form* of comics-story telling, "artistic" or not, that constitutes the crucial factor in putting over this universal appeal. The potency of the picture story is not a matter of modern theory but of anciently established truth. Before man thought in words he felt in pictures. Man still prefers to short-cut his mental processes by skipping the laryngeal substitutes and visualizing directly the dramatic situations that rouse his emotions. Eight or nine people out of ten get more emotional "kick" out of seeing a beautiful girl on the stage, the screen, or the picture-magazine page

displaying her charms in person, or via camera or artist's pen, than they derive from verbal substitutes describing her compelling charms. It's too bad for us "literary" enthusiasts, but it's the truth nevertheless—pictures tell any story more effectively than words. Modern evidence of this prehistorically established fact is furnished by the amazing success of tabloid picture papers like the *New York News*, which has attained the largest circulation of any newspaper in the world; the growth of the pictorial weeklies, *Life*, *Look*, and a host of successful followers; and, the chief case in point, the amazing vogue of our modern picture-story classic, the comics magazine.

You think, perhaps, as I did before I looked into the matter, that comics continuities are something new in the world of fantasy and fiction. You are wrong; so was I. Mr. M. C. Gaines, a former school principal who originated the comic magazine and is publisher of a large group of these potent periodicals, including "Picture Stories from the Bible," went back to ages past and dug out some interesting facts about the success of the picture story during the early dawn of civilization.¹ The ancients, as numerous historical monuments attest, recorded their military triumphs as well as their domestic comedies in picture stories. These visual histories were done in shells, lapis lazuli, and pink limestone. We have specimens from Ur produced in 3500 B.C. In that early attempt to laugh and live with all the people through a pictorial medium, two girls were shown in a hair-pulling contest while other panels depicted victorious royal armies conquering and subjecting national enemies. What have we today? The same thing precisely, done with artist's ink, zinc plates, and a four-color printing process. The new development, accomplishing the ancient purpose, lies merely in the fact that modern mechanical facilities permit comic strip producers to *distribute* their picture tales to a hundred million people instead of carving them on a stationary stone monument where only a few daring travelers could ever see them. The recreational appeal of picture dramas has *always* existed; the means of contacting vast populations with these pictorial creations constitutes the real achievement of our present age.

As the technique of picture publication evolved, the art of visual stimulation of mass emotions kept pace. Back in 1521, when the artist Hans Cranach picturized Martin Luther's *Passional Christi und Antichristi*, showing the Savior's humility in rebuking contrast to the pomposity of churchmen, the form of publication was crude indeed and the moral propaganda type of story content fell equally far from the mark of universal appeal. Satire and caricatures of the sins of notorious sinners did a little better as the printing process came into its own at the beginning of the eighteenth century. William Hogarth's "Rake's Progress" was a distinct success, though still damned by an overdose of reform motive. Political cartoons then, as now, appealed violently to partisan groups and evoked corresponding scorn from the parties attacked.

¹ A copy of M. C. Gaines's interesting articles entitled "Narrative Illustration" and "Good Triumphs over Evil" may be obtained without charge by writing to him at 225 Lafayette Street, New York City.

Nothing notable was accomplished in technique for another century, when Wilhelm Busch and some printers got together on a line-drawing proposition that resulted in his famous *Sketch Book*, and an equally notable volume portraying the undisguised naughtiness of two young devils, "Max and Moritz." This departure from accepted convention in both art and story content was a long step in the right direction—a step backward, toward the uninhibited, primitive, popular appeal of totem-pole carvings and Egyptian monument pictures along the Nile. The visual form must be simplified to essentials, the emotional response evoked must be instant and universal. When these two requirements are satisfied, it remains only to distribute the published product widely to secure a vast reading audience. Line drawing met the test of simplicity of art form, and childish mischief appealed to the repressed human wish to kick over the traces, smash conventional restraint, and eat forbidden fruit. This cartoon formula, therefore—purveyed to increasing multitudes by accommodating printers—set the pattern for the early stages of our modern comics era. Rudolph Dirks followed precisely the style and story theme of "Max and Moritz" when he began drawing "The Katzenjammer Kids," first popularized by Hearst papers in 1897 and still among the leading newspaper comic strips.

Roughly, the evolution of comics may be divided into three steps or stages. The first period, from 1900 to 1920, consisted almost entirely of comics that were meant to be comical. The second period, beginning hesitantly with the introduction of pathos and human interest into the continuities of the early twenties, reached its full fruition about 1930 when leading comics frankly stopped trying to be funny and became adventure strips. The third comics period began definitely in 1938 with the advent of Superman and constitutes a radical departure from all previously accepted standards of story telling and drama. Comics continuities of the present period are not meant to be humorous, nor are they primarily concerned with dramatic adventure. Their emotional appeal is wish fulfillment. There is no drama in the ordinary sense, because Superman is invincible, invulnerable. He can leap over skyscrapers, fly through the air and catch airplanes, toss battleships around, or repel bullets with his bare skin. Superman never risks danger; he is always, and by definition, superior to all menace.

Superman and his innumerable followers satisfy the universal human longing to be stronger than all opposing obstacles and the equally universal desire to see good overcome evil, to see wrongs righted, underdogs nip the pants of their oppressors, and, withal, to experience vicariously the supreme gratification of the *deus ex machina* who accomplishes these monthly miracles of right triumphing over not-so-mighty might. Here we find the Homeric tradition rampant—the Achilles with or without a vulnerable heel, the Hector who defends his home town from foreign invaders, wronged Agamemnon who pursues his righteous vengeance with relentless fury, and the wily Ulysses who cleverly accomplishes a downfall of attractive if culpable enemies by the exercise of superhuman wisdom. Homer did very well for himself with the troubadour technique in an age when pictures had to be painted by imagina-

tion. But M. C. Gaines, who perceived the Homeric inheritance of Siegal and Shuster and who turned the comics magazine into an illuminated vehicle for their dramaless but wish-fulfilling Superman tales, did far better—for himself and for his associates and followers. There can be little question, as this article goes to press, that the wish-fulfillment period of picture-story evolution is reaching new heights of reader interest, popular favor, publishers' profits, and—I say this thoughtfully—moral educational benefits for the younger generation.

If children *will* read comics, come Hail Columbia or literary devastation, why isn't it advisable to give them some constructive comics to read? After all, 100,000,000 Americans can't be wrong—at least about what they like. But the more decisive argument is psychological. What life-desires do you wish to stimulate in your child? Do you want him (or her) to cultivate weakling's aims, sissified attitudes? Your youngster may not inherit the muscles to do 100 yards in nine seconds flat, or make the fullback position on an All-American football team. But if not, all the more reason why he should cultivate the wish for power along constructive lines within the scope of his native abilities. The wish to be super-strong is a healthy wish, a vital, compelling, power-producing desire. The more the *Superman-Wonder Woman* picture stories build up this inner compulsion by stimulating the child's natural longing to battle and overcome obstacles, particularly evil ones, the better chance your child has for self-advancement in the world.

Certainly there can be no argument about the advisability of strengthening the fundamental human desire, too often buried beneath stultifying diversions and disguises, to see good overcome evil. "Happy" endings are shown in the new comics as products of superhuman efforts to help others—not as mere happenstances mysteriously obeying the "Pollyanna" rule that "everything always comes out all right in the end." The moral force of this new type of story teaching is stronger far than the older appeal to self-interest. "Be good and you'll be happy" is a difficult idea to sell. Children don't believe it, even in stories. Nor are they greatly impressed by its converse: "If you're bad you'll get punished." They qualify the latter precept by adding, "If you are caught." And when a religious teacher resorts to the next world for a flavor of inevitability, the averagely bright child in this cynical age remarks, "But how do you *know* what happens in the next world?" Heaven and hell are a long way off, psychologically, from a child's today. But heroics are their daily bread.

Feeling big, smart, important, and winning the admiration of their fellows are realistic rewards all children strive for. It remains for moral educators to decide what type of behavior is to be regarded as heroic. Shall we teach our children that the heroic thing, the deed for which they will attain desired kudos, is killing enemies and conquering their neighbors, *à la* Napoleon, Hitler, Genghis Khan, and others of their ilk? Or shall we make the great stunt in a child's mind the protection of the weak and the helping of humanity? The Superman-Wonder Woman school of picture-story telling emphatically insists upon heroism in the altruistic pattern. Superman never kills;

Wonder Woman saves her worst enemies and reforms their characters. If the incredible barrage of comic strips now assaulting American minds establishes this new definition of heroics in the thought reflexes of the rising generation, it will have been worth many times its weight in pulp paper and multicolored ink.

Comics have many faults. Some of their most glaring misdemeanors have been curbed; other assaults on culture and good taste go merrily on. My first sortie into the comics field was in the role of reformer. I was retained as consulting psychologist by comics publishers to analyze the present shortcomings of monthly picture magazines and recommend improvements. An advisory board of educators was formed for the "Superman-D. C." group of publications, including such outstanding authorities as Professor W. W. D. Sones, Director of Curriculum Study at the University of Pittsburgh; Professor Robert Thorndike of Teachers College, Columbia; and Dr. C. Bowie Millican, Professor of English Literature at New York University. The active efforts of these and others and the cooperation of the publishers, headed by M. C. Gaines and his associates, have raised considerably the standards of English, legibility, art work, and story content in some twenty comics magazines totalling a monthly circulation of more than 6,000,000. Picture stories have proved effective in teaching school subjects, notably English, which formerly was the most frequently criticized feature of the strips. We have inaugurated the policy of introducing into continuities a certain percentage of words which are above the average child-reader level, with the result that children soon determine the meanings and add these new words to their vocabularies. Excerpts from Superman have been used successfully in teaching English in the public schools, notably in a junior high school at Lynn, Massachusetts, where a special Superman workbook was compiled by a progressive young English instructor. These developments are only in their early stages, with tremendous possibilities indicated by initial experiments.

The most radical departure from previously accepted rules of picture-story content resulted from an early recommendation of mine to the publishers. It seemed to me, from a psychological angle, that the comics' worst offense was their blood-curdling masculinity. A male hero, at best, lacks the qualities of maternal love and tenderness which are as essential to a normal child as the breath of life. Suppose your child's ideal becomes a *superman* who uses his extraordinary power to help the weak. The most important ingredient in the human happiness recipe still is missing—*love*. It's smart to be strong. It's big to be generous. But it's sissified, according to exclusively masculine rules, to be tender, loving, affectionate, and alluring. "Aw, that's girl's stuff!" snorts our young comics reader. "Who wants to be a *girl*?" And that's the point; not even girls want to be girls so long as our feminine archetype lacks force, strength, power. Not wanting to be girls they don't want to be tender, submissive, peaceloving as good women are. Women's strong qualities have become despised because of their weak ones. The obvious remedy is to create a feminine character with all the strength of a Superman plus all the allure

of a good and beautiful woman. This is what I recommended to the comics publishers.

My suggestion was met by a storm of mingled protests and guffaws. Didn't I know that girl heroines had been tried in pulps and comics and, without exception, found failures? Yes, I pointed out, but they weren't *superwomen*—they weren't superior to men in strength as well as in feminine attraction and love-inspiring qualities. Well, asserted my masculine authorities, if a woman hero were stronger than a man, she would be even less appealing. Boys wouldn't stand for *that*; they'd resent the strong gal's superiority. No, I maintained, men actually submit to women now, they do it on the sly with a sheepish grin because they're ashamed of being ruled by weaklings. Give them an alluring woman stronger than themselves to submit to and they'll be *proud* to become her willing slaves!

M. C. Gaines listened to our arguments for a while. Then he said: "Well, Doc, I picked Superman after every syndicate in America turned it down. I'll take a chance on your *Wonder Woman*! But you'll have to write the strip yourself. After six months' publication we'll submit your woman hero to a vote of our comics readers. If they don't like her I can't do any more about it." That was fair enough. I wrote *Wonder Woman*. I found an artist—Harry Peter, an old-time cartoonist who began with Bud Fisher on the *San Francisco Chronicle* and who knows what life is all about—and with Gaines' helpful cooperation we created the first successful woman character in comics magazines. After five months the publishers ran a popularity contest between *Wonder Woman* and seven rival men heroes, with startling results. *Wonder Woman* proved a forty-to-one favorite over her nearest male competitor, capturing more than 80 per cent of all the votes cast by thousands of juvenile comics fans. The credit is all *Wonder Woman's*—I mean the wonder which is really woman's when she adds masculine strength to feminine tenderness and allure. The kids who rated *Wonder Woman* tops in an otherwise masculine galaxy of picture story stars weren't voting for a clever script writer (of that I assure you!), nor were they expressing a preference for Harry Peter's drawing, understanding as it is. They were saying by their votes, "We *love* a girl who is stronger than men, who uses her strength to help others and who allures us with the love appeal of a true woman!"

So there's the latest formula in comics—superstrength, altruism, and feminine love allure, combined in a single character. Forget the crudities of plot, drawing, printing, and color work—or, rather, regard them as essential simplifications in constructing an emotional stimulus with universal appeal. Then consider our modern facilities for making cheap paper from trees, printing millions of pages at lightning speed in nature's four primary colors, and the familiar miracles of transportation which distribute hundreds of thousands of picture-story books across a continent in a few hours' time. Add these products of human progress together and you can understand, without straining a sinew of your imagination, the astounding consumption of America's most popular mental vitamin, the wish-fulfilling picture story.

BETSEY BARTON (*daughter of the publicist Bruce Barton*) suffered a tragic automobile accident some ten years ago when she was a girl of sixteen. The long and gallant struggle to readjust her life is movingly described in *And Now to Live Again*. Unselfishly she has devoted much of her time to the rehabilitation of others who, like herself, have had to remake their lives.

THE BEHAVIOR OF PAIN

ARTICLES in every current magazine and newspaper reflect our anxiety about the wounded veterans that are being returned to us from the war fronts. In our concern over the wounded veterans, however, we are apt to forget that the civilian wounded make up a far larger part of the nation's casualties. In the eleven days following the invasion of Normandy, for instance, there were 10,000 wounded in the war and 25,000 injured at home. Rehabilitation, then, is not solely a current military problem; it is always with us as a civilian problem.

Its solution depends upon our understanding of the behavior of pain. For pain, like most things that come to us, can result in opportunity or loss. Too often the suffering that results from a physical disability results in loss. Through the new advances in science and our greater awareness of the problem, however, there lies hope for a new mental attitude toward pain—an attitude which, if we are wise enough and loving enough, can transform it into a broad new horizon of opportunity for the wounded.

When pain comes to those we love, we feel cut off from them. They seem separated from us by a gulf of suffering that we cannot cross. "He is wounded; I am well," we say to ourselves. "On what ground can we meet?" And because we can think of no meeting ground, we fall into a common error. We assume that only the maimed can understand the maimed; the well cannot reach the invalid.

A basis for great understanding between the well and the invalid does exist, however. It lies in the fact that in pain, as in all human behavior, there are certain laws. Certain basic patterns underlie all the varieties of human hurt. And it has been made clear to me that if all of us—well and maimed—could know these patterns we would gain the insight we need into the meeting ground we crave—the ground on which we can reach out to the wounded even if we have not ourselves suffered as they are now suffering.

The fact that there are laws underlying the behavior of pain was recently demonstrated to me when I wrote a little book on rehabilitation. In the account I included some of my own experiences and told the stories of the fight to a victorious finish of many of the physically disabled with whom I

"The Behavior of Pain" from *The American Mercury*, May 1945. Reprinted by permission.

had come in contact. I wrote as a stranger, as a separate being, as a lonely traveler. For just as the well assume that the maimed live in a different hemisphere, the afflicted in turn make a similar false assumption, and regard themselves as unique personalities. Thus I, too, wrote from out of what I then considered "my world."

When the book had been out for a while, letters began to come in. They came from all over the country, from people in all kinds of jobs, with different concerns, of widely separated ages. Some of them had physical handicaps; others had mental or emotional burdens. Yet each one wrote, as I had written, with the feeling that until then he had been alone, that until now he had been unique. And each added, with a thrill of discovery and recognition: "I am no longer alone; I share your experience."

As I read these letters day after day it became apparent to me that so-called normal people have not recognized the laws of pain that *all* human beings experience. Those who wrote me had been tragically cut off from their fellow-men by their hurt because we segregated them; we put the maimed into a world all their own. We feel they are different from us and we divide suffering into various kinds and types. We seem to believe that if we are hurt we become so hopelessly changed that we can no longer be understood. Actually, pain is a bridge over which all can cross. It may be the pathway between the world of the maimed and the world of the well who have also suffered pain.

A young girl who has been bedridden sixteen years, writes: "Again and again you set down in words my ideas, thoughts and problems. I found myself nodding or silently weeping in agreement or giggling over similar experiences. . . . You have put into words what is in my heart."

From a young woman in a mental hospital: "So you see, although you were crippled in body and I am crippled in mind, the things you say apply to me . . . I understand them."

From a young married woman: "Last June my first baby was born, living two short weeks. During labor I had a cerebral hemorrhage which resulted in paralysis of my right side. My arm is good as new except for writing and I get around on crutches swell. I had so many of the feelings and thoughts and experiences you had . . ."

From a young woman: "You have it all there—I know because when I was seventeen I lost my left leg . . ."

Actually we are all fundamentally alike. *The maimed and the well do not differ from each other.* Here, it seems to me, is the first law.

And once we understand the first, the second law follows easily. For these letters prove to me that everyone who is hurt reacts the same way. We retreat into ourselves. This pattern is seen in miniature when we have a tooth knocked out. The nerve retreats into the jaw as if to protect itself from further hurt. And all the letter-writers report the same thing: after their injury they retreated into themselves in an unconscious effort to avoid further feeling and to protect themselves from further pain.

When we are hurt, whatever the cause of that hurt, we react in the same way. This is the second law.

2

To outsiders looking in, those who have been hurt seem surrounded by a wall of indifference almost impossible to penetrate. The sufferers so repress their painful mental and emotional reactions to hurt that sometimes the seeds of it lie hidden deep within them, out of reach. It became plain to me, through my correspondence, that when we are hurt we suffer mentally and emotionally as well as physically—that is, in our total being and not just in the obviously affected part.

Those who are hurt in one part of their body will suffer, by that hurt, in all the other parts, for "all are but parts of one stupendous whole." This is the third law.

The recognition of this unity has revolutionized medicine and started a whole new concept of therapy. For once it became apparent that the mind and body and heart are not separate entities but, sick or well, are interjoined and affect each other, the old divisions of medicine would no longer hold true. We can no longer divide ourselves into specialized and self-sufficient departments. The mind and body and heart are interdependent parts of a whole. We are a whole; we function as a whole and therefore we must be treated as a whole. Thus today we are exploring and emphasizing a new branch of medicine called psychosomatic. *Psyche* means mind and *soma* means body; hence, mind-body medicine.

All these truths would be more evident if we had a greater awareness of what actually constitutes the whole person. We must constantly remind ourselves of the beautiful web-like interweaving of the body-mind structure. The brain is the organ of the mind, just as the stomach is the organ of assimilation and digestion. And without proper mental food, the brain will get indigestion; our thinking will become cloudy and muddy. Our mental life is not a mysterious something suspended in the air, without any coarse physical basis. Thinking, the supreme activity of the total body-brain structure, is largely dependent for its clarity and accuracy upon the fitness and efficiency of all the body tissue.

Human behavior depends upon the involuntary activity of the inner organs and the voluntary activity of action, speech and thought. It also depends upon our age; what kind of environment we were brought up in; what people we have come in contact with; what characteristics we have inherited; what ideas we have absorbed; what degree of intelligence we have, and what kind of a job we hold.

All these things, as well as our body-brain structure, make up our whole person and determine our behavior. We cannot react with pieces of ourselves and our experience. We react as a whole. If we are crippled physically, we will be crippled mentally and emotionally as well.

We now know that a soldier can develop drastic physical symptoms although he has had a mental shock. A war neurosis victim, shocked by the

sight of his entire regiment being wiped out, can carry the unconscious retreat into himself so far that he will suffer from deafness, speechlessness, amnesia and paralysis. Those who have suffered an emotional shock, as the loss of one they love, can feel so bitter and depressed that they will contemplate suicide. A flier in China writes: "My new wife died and I have recovered part of my balance in ten months. . . . I feel ashamed of myself for thinking I'd run the course. . . ."

And those who suffer from a physical injury also suffer from humiliation, bitterness, frustration and paralysis of the will. A young man who had infantile paralysis very seriously at the age of eighteen writes, as so many of the disabled do: "As for me, I had no will at first. I did not care."

The letters go on to report that the most striking effect of the withdrawal into ourselves when we have been hurt, through a desire to feel no more pain, is the complete loss of initiative. The newly hurt cannot help themselves in any way. They are weak, constantly tired, unaware of the inner conflict caused by their repression and unable to resolve it.

The doctors and physiotherapists and nurses do their work in healing the bodies of the wounded and do it well. If we ourselves would help the wounded of body, we must observe the unities of the third law. We must bring them mind healing and heart healing as well.

3

Those who have been hurt are completely dependent at first upon outsiders—for help, for release, for comfort. This is the fourth law.

Letters corroborate this: "Emphasize care and understanding by family and friends." "An understanding and patient family and persevering doctors worked until I progressed from complete paralysis to a state where only my legs were affected . . ." "I support your plea for understanding and love from friends and parents . . . without which recovery would be well nigh impossible."

When such support is not given, or when it is withdrawn, the wounded have a difficult time. A young man who fell thirty feet suffered a skull injury which resulted in paralysis and a state of childlikeness for over a year. His wife had no patience with the gradual recovery of his memory and she divorced him. The young man's mind went into an eclipse after this, from which, five years later, it is just emerging.

A girl out West wrote me that her fiancé remained loyal to her after she broke her back in an automobile accident, only to terminate the engagement two years later when he went into the Army. Until then she had been making good progress toward recovery from her injury, but the shattering of her matrimonial plans sent her back to bed in a state of complete collapse. Again and again these experiences indicate that a broken heart is the most difficult of all hurts to heal. Time can knit broken bones. Nerves and muscles can be reeducated and grow strong again, but if the physical hurt has deprived the victim of hope, he has no will to live. A broken heart is not a poetic fantasy, but a concrete fact.

A letter from an older man, an arthritic, sums up the situation: "Stricken romance, stricken love, are something for which, in the case of the cripple, society makes no provision. But for some, love is ten thousand a year and for others, it is a pretty face; for God's elect, it is dedication." When such dedication exists, any amount of pain and deprivation can be redeemed, made lovely.

And when it is present, the suffering of the one who loves can be far greater than that of the one who has suffered the physical injury. I quote a letter of a young major: "Yesterday was our wedding anniversary. This is the third Christmas my wife has spent in the hospital . . . she broke her neck in an automobile accident and since then has been completely paralyzed, unable to move anything but her arms—not her hands, her legs, or her head. . . . When you suggest that the one hurt is not able to picture the feelings of the loved one not hurt, how right you are. I can appreciate the tormented heart and brain of your father, trying to make decisions which would help you to get well, and not being a medical man, in a quandary what to do, whom to believe, and so on and on. It's not so hard immediately after the accident occurs; but as weeks, then months, then years go by, and improvement slows down to a snail's pace, and each day you see the one you love with all your heart and soul almost stop getting better, it takes a good bit of courage to keep up a stout heart and not lose faith and hope . . ."

When I first began to receive these letters I was surprised at their length and the intimacy of detail in them. I now see that this occurs because each writer is desperately anxious to talk about himself and his experience. It is almost as though he had had no opportunity to tell of the things that are in his heart. We are beginning to see that those on the outside can make or break the readjustment of a suffering person. They can literally push them deeper and perhaps irretrievably into themselves by a careless word or act, or they can draw them toward release and healing.

Here then would seem to be a very simple basis on which to establish contact with those who are hurt: by not avoiding the issues. By allowing them to voice their doubts and questions, to tell of their fears and their anxiety. For in so doing, in talking to those they love and trust, they will be given some release through having shared their burden. The silent shout of recognition that has come to me in these letters has not done so because these people felt they could talk only to someone else who had suffered, but because they were at last able, without embarrassment and pain, to talk about the things that mattered to them most.

We have a national character trait, I believe, that is reflected here. We like things to be pleasant and smooth; and if they are not, we do not relish looking behind the normal shadow-play to the torment underneath. Accident or disease or mishap can catch us up at any instant in our lives. We must be ready to look it straight in the face when it comes, to see it open-eyed. "It is a pity how few of us Americans are equipped or helped to face the tragedies of our own lives," wrote the flier in China whose young wife had died. "No one of us believes how nearly inevitable tragedies are and few seem to come out happy and unwarped."

As the loving support of friends and loved ones draws out the one who has been hurt to speak of the things that matter to him, he will be reassured, he will begin to feel secure in the knowledge that this is not a lonely battle which he has to fight all by himself, but an experience that has the power to teach him much, just as those about him can learn from it.

4

For when there is a loving communion brought to bear upon any kind of suffering, *that suffering teaches both the outsider and the one who is suffering*. This is the fifth law. The outsiders write:

From one young woman: "I work at one of the shipyards as a welder. I have for the past two years, and I've had such a grand chance to see the attitude and work of a good many people. I don't think any of us does our work as well or as willingly as we could or should, there's too much of the idea of doing as little as we can get by with, too much carelessness and irresponsibility and thoughtlessness. Many a time I've heard some dispute the work assigned to them; I've often grumbled at the tasks given me. Frequently they are difficult or especially hard to reach. But nevertheless, after reading of the hopes and triumphs of those who have been so sorely hurt and handicapped in their struggle to develop and use their abilities to the best and fullest measure possible . . . I realize how little we appreciate our good fortune and our abilities and how reluctantly we attempt to use them. . . ."

From a private in the Pacific area: "While I was in high school I spent all my time with a girl who lived near me. Infantile paralysis when she was five had left both of her legs paralyzed. Even at the time I knew her, over ten years later, she was unable to leave her chair without help. Yet in spite of this, we went to the movies, concerts, baseball games, and many other places. . . . She had such a natural, unaffected way of treating her handicap that once you knew her you never thought of pity. She could not walk but she had more understanding, intelligence, appreciativeness and sweetness than any girl I've known since. I wanted to marry her more than anything else in the world until, while I was in college, she died of pneumonia . . . I've never met another girl like her . . . she possessed all the qualities that men dream of in women but rarely find. . . ."

From a young woman: "This has a great deal of bearing on suffering of any sort. And particularly on rehabilitation of one's slipping resolutions. . . . The deeper resolution I keep making is: Live one hour at a time in the light of all the beautiful things one knows and if they vanish, then in the dark, but in faith. . . . One cannot face all of life at once, either pain or waiting. One does not have to. That is never demanded. Only one hour at a time. It can be done if one does not let oneself look ahead. . . . And from each hour so lived comes new strength . . . but for every backsliding comes new weakness, too. There is, however, some light here: I have discovered that just because you backslide there is no reason to stop trying. . . ."

Thus, if we understand the laws that govern them—a physical disability, a

mental hurt or an emotional injury—these things are not necessarily a lonely and sterile experience. They are not necessarily a time of withdrawal and negation. They can be a time of experience that is as creative in essence for the compassionate and receptive onlooker as for the sufferer himself.

When people ask me now what they should do for their wounded boys or relatives, I feel very much like saying to them what St. Augustine once said long ago: "Love, and do what you will." For if we love deeply enough and quietly enough so that our emotions do not cloud our understanding, we will find that meeting ground we crave where we can reach anyone, whether they be full of pain or not. It is the meeting ground I discovered through the letters; it is the meeting ground we—maimed or well—share with all others.

We call it the human heart.

WALTER D. TEAGUE *The "D" in Walter D. Teague's name might just as well stand for "Designer" as for the legal "Dorwin." After four years' study with the Art Students' League (1903-07) he concentrated on design problems in advertising, books, and magazines; he branched out into the field of industrial design where he won a fine reputation for outstanding work with Ford, Eastman, Goodyear, and other prominent firms. Winner of the American Design Award (1939) and the National Advertising Award (1941), Teague somehow found time along the way to write a mystery novel (perhaps as an experiment in another form of design). His handsomely illustrated *Design This Day*, from which our selection is taken, should offer students a new and pleasant experience.*

PROGRAM

To the modern man his physical environment is merely new material, an opportunity for manipulation. It may be that God made the world, but that is no reason why we should not make it over.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL

IN OUR times we have had a number of Five Year and Three Year Plans, which were going to make a notable increase in human happiness. But the specified time has passed with misery registering, if anything, a somewhat more painful level than before. Social reorganizations on a stupendous scale have been launched, based on widely different statements of principle but all aimed at achieving a more abundant life for everybody. At this date, the

"Program," from *Design This Day*, copyright, 1940, by Walter Dorwin Teague. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

enormous energy generated in these movements by this high aim is, in every instance, being concentrated on keeping a small group of exceedingly unattractive men in control of the lives and fortunes of their fellow citizens. Men feel an overpowering impulse to rebuild their world, and are the dupe of any specious plan. The result to date is a deep and growing skepticism as to the adequacy of any man's brain for the task of planning society, and the adequacy of any man's moral stature for the task of putting a comprehensive plan into effect. All our planners and leaders fit themselves rapidly and neatly to Santayana's definition of a fanatic—one who redoubles his efforts when he has forgotten his aim.

The trouble with our planning is that it is too comprehensive and too detailed, and too exactly programmed. More plans for human betterment have been wrecked on their own principles and programs than on any overt opposition. We see only a little way into the future, and yet we lay out exact inflexible plans of campaigns into this country whose terrain has never been seen or mapped. We assume that we shall reach our objective by seven-league strides instead of by the careful step-at-a-time that is the inevitable method of human progress. Our headlong rashness lands us in ditches too wide for leaping and up against walls that bloody our heads. The duces and fuehrers and commissars and social reformers of this kind and that rush noisily on ahead, each with his own banner of salvation and each into his own morass. Men grow increasingly doubtful of the possibility of finding our objective tied up in any compact formula, or of attaining it by any simple social *bouleversement*.

Yet all the time, while leaders shriek and bombs fall, the builders are at work. The vision of a rebuilt world grows clearer to more men, and the step-by-step progress toward it does not falter. The builders feel into the future, groping carefully, aware of their own ignorance and ready like all good scientists—"knowers"—to adapt their plan instantly, at any moment, to the new truths and the unforeseen conditions that may be revealed as they progress. If they make a plan, it is one of objectives only, and these not too definite. A good scientist says, "In the light of the evidence so far revealed, this appears to be true." The builders say, "So far as we can see from where we stand, this appears to be desirable."

As for programs, these must be limited to today's and tomorrow's work—the tasks we can see immediately before us. It is impossible to say, "We will first do this, and then that, and afterwards that." We can only say, "We will do, as fast and as well as we can, the multitudinous tasks that lie around us, clearly to be seen, and crying to be done; as we accomplish these we will advance to the new tasks then revealed to us." All progress is opportunist, and all plans should be tentative.

So, when we list the objectives that appear to us, today, to be desirable, it is obvious that no definitions can be precise and no sequence of achievements can be exactly forecast. We can see a little way, yes, because we have certain known factors that are still malleable, still waiting to be cast into their ultimate form. And we can see certain needs that are inherent in human

nature, certain circumstances that must exist if the gregarious human animal is to live happily together in large numbers on the surface of a subjugated world. But scientists and engineers are at work in the laboratories and shops, ready to surprise us at any moment with new resources that may require a recasting of our plans. Our advance must be along a very wide front, slowly, moving up one division here, supporting it with another there.

The rebuilding of our cities will depend on the decentralization of industry, and both on the reorganization of our transportation systems. The recasting of our dwelling places into civilized forms will depend on all these three factors, and all four will depend on the speed with which men can adjust themselves to changing circumstances and broader outlooks.

The political and economic scheme is not the bottle-neck many theoretical world-builders think it. It is a convention and should be a convenience, and it will not be revised successfully according to any *a priori*, absolute dogma: it will be adjusted as we proceed, step by step, to make it work under the circumstances we have definitely decided are desirable. We are a race of individual men and not a race of principles, theories, or causes: we advance not by theoretical agreement but by agreement on concrete, tangible circumstance about which there can be no battle of definitions. The problem of design is the creation of an environment in which men can live with health, interest, good will, urbanity and dignity. It will be accomplished as these attributes of life are clearly envisioned as an aim by more and more men, and as the task advances it in turn will reveal to more and more men a conception of life endowed with these attributes.

The major fields on which design must work can be listed only consecutively, but their order is not an order either of importance or of time. They are interdependent and work on them must proceed simultaneously. Also our view of them now, it must be repeated, is tentative and based only on factors known today. Constant revision of our view must be effected as we advance in the light of new knowledge, added experience, and broader understanding.

1. The increasing interdependence of men is knitting the whole human race into one social and economic organism, so that a strike in Detroit is felt on a rubber plantation of Brazil and a frost in Florida affects the breakfast tables of Chicago and London. Against the weaving of this racial network, a wave of nationalism is at the moment fighting a vicious but a hopeless counter-action. It is doomed to collapse because men can no longer live apart from other men, even in national groups. We shall accept this fact, and plan accordingly, or we shall abandon the whole system of specialized production and general exchange we have been building up for three half-centuries, and relapse into barbarism for lack of an alternative. There is no absolute assurance that we shall make the right choice, but our system is still so young, so vigorous and so expansive that it is hard to conceive of its destruction. Probably we are witnessing the last stand of an isolationist philosophy which served well enough for many centuries and which our conservative race is loath to

relinquish as it is loath to relinquish any old and cherished attitude. We may kick and scream, but in the end we yield to inevitable change.

Our system, if it persists, will continue to be based on the free movement of men and goods. This makes our transportation facilities a critical factor in our civilization, as they have been since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The pattern of life in America in the Nineteenth Century was determined by the railroads more than by any other single influence. The reform of the railroads is certainly among the most pressing problems confronting us today, if it doesn't actually top the list. And this reform is no mere matter of building streamlined trains or any kind of lighter and faster equipment. The principles of railroad construction and operation are basically wrong for this year of grace and will have to be supplanted by a fresh approach to the whole problem.

When railroads were first built a century or so ago, the most practical method of constructing a smooth highway for swift traffic was to lay two iron rails on wooden ties, and equip vehicles with flanged iron wheels to fit these rails. This was an expensive and a rigid system, but it worked. The cars could run on nothing but the rails, transfer from one set of rails to another could be accomplished only by a complicated switching system, the radius of curves was very large, the friction between wheels and rails provided little traction for hill-climbing, it was necessary to build enormous weight into the rolling stock. Because of all these facts, railroads sought straight lines and level routes, and the country became crisscrossed with a sparse grillwork of inflexible steel highways.

Along these highways industry was forced to coagulate, towns and cities grew and population became congested. "Off the railroad" became a hinterland in which only agricultural pursuits could be followed with any success. When this system had become finally fixed, a third of a century ago, a far-sighted man in Detroit began building cheap automobiles and the whole pattern lost its reason for being. So did the steel rails and the flanged wheels. The railroads maintain the roadbeds of a hundred years ago, but all the wide interstices of their stiff gridiron have been filled with a new network of highways of a very different type. Over these new, smooth, concrete ribbons, light cars and trucks carry passengers and freight swiftly from door to door. There is a new flexibility, a new convenience, a new economy in this modern system of transportation. There is a new congestion on the highways, of course, but traffic is no longer stiffly canalized by the steel rails: it flows, in easy freedom, over the land. So long as the railroads are *rail* roads, they cannot hope to compete. They are being bled to death by a competition they cannot meet.

But the railroads have a priceless asset: they own broad rights-of-way that still are usually the shortest lines through what are still the densest concentrations of population. These rights-of-way are almost gradeless as compared with motor-highways, they follow shortest routes, they have no sharp curves, they are almost and can be quite without obstruction by cross traffic. Their breadth is only partially used at present. Suppose these rights-of-way were paved with concrete from edge to edge! Suppose they were divided into traffic

lanes for varying services, and all their passengers and freight carried in light, powerful units of relatively small size and low cost, powered by internal combustion engines and borne on rubber tires. These private, specialized highways could then perform a service which the public highways cannot perform and their usefulness and their prosperity would return together.

The center lanes of these reborn "railroads" would be concrete-paved but steel-walled channels (using as much steel as the present system requires, no doubt) for very high speed traffic. Torpedo-like vehicles, automatically controlled, would be shot through these channels at speeds only reached by airplanes now. With necessity for human steering and control eliminated, these speeds could pass two hundred miles an hour with safety. Instead of a Twentieth Century train leaving the Grand Central Station once a day for an overnight trip to Chicago, we should have capsules of a manageable size departing on their breathless four-hour flights at hourly intervals, or oftener.

These very high-speed vehicles would have teardrop forms as perfectly streamlined as airplane bodies. Their motive power probably would be an airplane motor and propeller mounted on the nose. They would be borne on a series of wheels placed in a single line below the body, but as speed accelerated most of the weight would be lifted off these wheels. Fins and automatically operated ailerons at the tail would assist in maintaining equilibrium both in the straightaway and at curves. Short streamlined projections at each side, like very stubby wings, would enclose rubber-tired wheels which would contact with the steel sidewalls of the channel, and thus eliminate the necessity for directional control. Spacing, starting and stopping would all be automatic. Thus we should have most of the advantages of airplane transport, such as speed, largely air-borne weight and operation by instruments, but we should avoid all the present hazard of airplane travel.

Next the central high-speed lanes would be lanes for long-haul, heavy traffic, carried in trailer trains longer than are practicable on public highways but far short of present freight-train lengths. These trailer trains would be broken up at loading point and destination, for convenient transport over public streets and roads. For the traffic on this new system would be door-to-door traffic, except in the case of the high-speed capsules.

Outer lanes would be for fast, short-haul traffic, both passenger and freight. Here, cruising speeds of a hundred miles an hour or more would be normal. Access to public highways would be provided at convenient but not too frequent intervals, always, of course, by means of over- or under-passes without crossing of lanes.

On these roadways there would be no such thing as one vehicle passing another in the same lane; automatic controls would keep vehicles in the same lane a safe distance apart; there would be no cross traffic of any kind, and the entire system would operate under rigid supervision which would maintain maximum speeds with safety. Thus a method of swift and direct transport, under private ownership but public regulation, would supplement the public highway system, the two complementing each other and integrating their services.

2. The public highway system will inevitably develop along the lines indicated by the more advanced construction of today, and forecast more than ten years ago by such men as Le Corbusier and our own Hugh Ferriss. Multiple lanes and elaborate clover-leaf intersections are not uncommon now and will be greatly expanded in the future, the whole aim being to canalize traffic according to speeds and to eliminate interference, friction and cross movements. Multiple-level streets in cities have existed on paper for years and tentative beginnings have been made toward their construction. Their final realization, however, depends on a radical revision of city plans, which must go much farther than double or triple decking of our present street systems, since these are definitely impractical in our present city scheme.

The conversion of our present railroad rights-of-way into a system of swift motorized transport would relieve the highways of a great burden of commercial traffic they are now compelled to accommodate. This traffic should and will follow the commercial lanes of the converted railroads and return the public highways to the democratic uses for which they were intended. These highways should recover the charming aspect of the old, pre-automobile country roads. In the parkway system in the environs of New York City we see how successfully this can be done. Park Commissioner Robert Moses will have a monument in any Utopia we succeed in building: he built the first roads that lead to it.

3. Our vehicles of transportation will undergo an orderly process of evolution, of course. It is impossible to predict their development beyond the stages now generally foreseen because any radical advancement depends on discoveries and inventions not yet made. These may be in the nature of new forms of motive power, either in fuel or engine design. The utilization of atomic energy is a well-known dream of the physicists, and it is not improbable that where an objective is so clearly defined it may be attained. Engineers are aware that the reciprocating piston involves an appalling waste of energy, and it is probable that we may discover "cool power" as we are now nearing a realization of "cool light." New metal alloys of greatly increased tensile strength will also have a profound influence on vehicular design.

Automobile design will follow clearly predictable lines until it is diverted by some of the advances mentioned, or by others as fundamental. Automobiles will be more cleanly streamlined, less easily damaged by contact, have higher power-weight ratios. Trains, as we now know them, will cease to exist. Water transport for pleasure has already reached a high stage of development and it will continue along the same line of evolution. Commercial water transport will produce simpler, more perfectly integrated forms, with resultant improvement in speed and reduction of operating cost. It is probable that our present type of luxury liner will be superseded by planes as a means of rapid transport, but will continue to serve for pleasure cruises.

More than any other form of transport, aviation awaits certain basic discoveries or inventions we cannot yet foresee. Already it is amazingly efficient and safe, but there still are fatal crashes too frequently, and airports, uneconomically vast, are growing larger instead of smaller. Undoubtedly there will be

improvement along the lines now so far advanced, but one cannot help feeling—and it really is an intuitive feeling—that there are certain huge gaps in our knowledge, which must be filled before aviation can supplant land transport to any great degree. The discoveries we may make perhaps have to do with the nature of the force of gravity, of which we now know only its effects. It is not inconceivable that we may come to understand this force at least well enough to control or counteract it by means of forces analogous to itself. A generation that has seen the science of radio communication develop is not startled by such a prediction. Certainly we need to acquire some basic knowledge which will enable our planes to rise practically vertically, hover motionless at will and descend as gently and safely as a falling leaf. Until we can do these things aviation will remain in a primitive stage. What the design of our planes will be when we can do them, no one can foretell. In the meantime, it is probable that molded plastics will largely supersede metal alloys in the construction of our present-type planes, with the manufacturing process much simplified as a result. These molded planes will be lighter, stronger, cheaper, swifter. And there will be great advancement in the control of flight by radio beams and other automatic agencies.

4. The motorization of our highway system has removed most reasons for industries to cluster close along the railway lines. The motorization of the railroads, and their integration with the public highways as supplementary commercial transport systems, will complete this decentralization of industry. Factories need not be on railways, workers need not live near factories. Already, in the fine country west of Dearborn, Henry Ford has established twenty-five or thirty small water-power plants as a practical demonstration of decentralization. These factories are located in extremely attractive surroundings, and each one employs twenty-five to three hundred and fifty workers in the production of particular parts or in skilled operations. These men and women work under ideal conditions, they can live on the land and cultivate their gardens with Voltairean equanimity. They are the forerunners of great numbers of workers who will escape the city slums and recover the pleasure in work their ancestors, if good craftsmen, may have known.

Light, cleanliness, order, healthful conditions, are already the commonly accepted objective of industrial planning. Aside from Mr. Ford's venture, many factories have been built in recent years in a form worthy of a civilization more advanced than ours. The elimination of smoke and dirt and the utilization of waste products are making these plants acceptable in any setting. They are acquiring the bright, metallic, orderly aspect which thrills us in so many of our modern products, but they are only forerunners of the shining factories of the future. From these factories, drudgery and mere burden-bearing will have disappeared; machines will do all the work of beasts, men will do the work that only rational animals can do. The laboratories, engineering departments and drafting rooms will be proportionately larger than any we can show today: the work of creating, discovering, planning, designing, will have grown to overshadow all other activities in the industrial world. Work will be creative.

5. The flight from the cities has already become something of a mass exodus. The well-to-do first abandoned their urban "mansions" for suburban houses in larger acreage. The wage earners, each in his family car, have discovered that their radius of possible residence is as great as the millionaire's. Many atrocious "subdivisions" have been built to receive him in flight, but great numbers of men are acquiring the habit of passing critical judgment on these efforts. The verdict is viciously adverse. As more people realize what housing can and should be, thousands of these crowded, flimsy breeding-boxes will be mowed down to be replaced by rationally planned residences, more economical of space.

The city will become a place of business, barter, intellectual and artistic exchange, social enjoyment and amusement, rather than a place of residence. Large numbers of people are necessary to support these phases of life, they must exist at focal points of population. But the city will be more sparsely built, a collection of tall towers separated by gardens and greensward, crossed by transport systems moving on different levels. The city air will be clean, for coal will not be burned within its limits and wood will be burned only in fireplaces—for pleasure. Our internal combustion engines will actually complete their combustion internally and the air will be free of their gases and fumes. The city will be a place of wide spaces, sunlight, greenery in summer and clean snow in winter. It will be quiet, urbane, civilized beyond anything the world has ever before accomplished in the line of city-building.

The country as a whole will become urbanized. That is, population will spread more evenly over its surface, but with the amenities of life available for all, and with frequent urban focal points at which the larger group activities can be pursued. This spread of population will not impair the beauty of the country, but will enhance it. And large areas of forest, plain, streams, lakes and ocean front will be preserved in a virgin state, so that wild life may flourish and the pleasures of solitude may be enjoyed. Agriculture will be integrated with our other industrial activities and become a scientific method of producing foodstuffs and industrial raw materials, instead of the somewhat haphazard, archaic craft it is today. Intensively practised, as a branch of bio-chemistry, it will require less land than at present but will produce more abundant and better results. Our enormously increased consumption will require all its production.

6. The dwellings of people will be of two types: one a development of the present apartment house, the other a type of detached house. The apartment house, or living tower, will be built in areas where there is reason for a congestion of population. This congestion may reach fifteen or twenty families per acre, which is considered sparse settlement today—but not more than ten per cent of the ground area will be occupied by buildings. The space between these widely separated towers will be utilized for playgrounds, gardens and parks. There is nothing new about this idea, but it has never yet been realized in actuality—always the free space is not adequate for the number of residents. The towers themselves will be, of course, much more sane and economical structures, and much pleasanter to live in than the present apartment house.

The aspect of these steel and crystal towers, rising at intervals in glistening brilliance above the tree-tops and the rolling lawns, will be amazingly beautiful. People may come to love their homeland with a more passionate devotion than they have any cause to feel today.

Detached houses, semi-detached or row houses will be built in areas where land is less in demand. Well-to-do people—and there will be well-to-do people, never fear—will build houses as they please, of course. These will be progressively less archaic and more creatively planned, and not all will be good but the average will be higher than now. The great improvement will come in the homes of people of moderate or little means. These will be constructed of large-scale, pre-fabricated units, and they will represent a far greater value for their cost than can be obtained by any sort of building methods practised now. They will not only be better and cheaper, but they will compose into far more desirable communities than ours.

It is probable that these communities will be organized on the "Neighborhood Unit" plan as first outlined by Col. Clarence Perry of the Russell Sage Foundation.¹ That is, large population groups will be formed of a mosaic of mainly self-sufficient, self-contained units, each including forty-five hundred to ten thousand people. Such a group is adequate to support schools, shops, amusements and recreational facilities, but small enough for mutual acquaintance and a more or less coherent social life. Anyone who has grown up in a small town knows how much he gained from intimate acquaintance with the cross-section of humanity such a community contains. This knowledge of our fellows, this schooling from childhood in group living, is essential to successful citizenship in the world, and these are advantages which cities as we know them have largely failed to provide. The "Neighborhood Unit" plan would restore to our communal life this helpful intimacy and mutual dependence, and yet a number of such units would be able to support the urban advantages which depend on larger population groups. The plan also facilitates the design of gracious, spacious and delightful towns, as everyone who has studied it will agree.

7. The better world of the future will require an enormously increased production of goods, and their more general and equitable distribution. There is a pseudo-philosophic attitude which maintains that possessions are a burden and a handicap, and this may frequently be true, although one often suspects that the disdain of property is partly compensatory. But there is a sense in which possessions are a liberating force, essential to any real freedom of thought and action. For instance, our modern civilization is predicated on the assumption of a varied diet, refrigerated foodstuffs, adequate heating in winter, copious hot and cold water, and ubiquitous bath tubs and water closets. These things recede into our background, and we give them no thought. But they have freed us from appalling discomfort and disease, and from futile preoccupation with our bodily functions. One must live in a society which does not

¹ *Housing for the Machine Age*, Russell Sage Foundation, 1939, is Col. Perry's fullest statement of this plan.

enjoy these facilities to appreciate how largely they enable us to ignore our bodies except as a source of pleasure.

Some of the advanced thinkers point out, derisively, that America is no happier because modern kitchens and bathrooms are so general. But the point is, they are *not* general. In some circles and levels, yes, but a majority of our people still make shift without them. They will not fulfill their mission until they are the normal equipment of all our living. A great many other things, still rarer, must also become universal possessions before our life can proceed on the plane it should occupy. Interesting, stimulating, creative work, for instance; emancipation from drudgery and a gracious setting for daily life; freedom of movement, free exchange of thought; bodily well-being and mental equanimity. A few people enjoy these advantages now: they should be equally available for everybody.

They all depend to some extent on our physical equipment for living. To make them general requires a great expansion and improvement of this equipment, in the fields of production, transportation, exchange, communication, housing, education, recreation. They demand the removal of staggering quantities of debris; the wreckage of past abortive efforts now cluttering the landscape, hampering our activities and rasping our nerves. They depend on the substitution of a rational order, convenience and rightness, so that the physical background of life becomes a facile aid to freedom and a source of pleasure instead of an irritation and a defeat. They demand in short that reconstruction of our environment we have been talking about.

If this reconstruction could be accomplished only through the loss of individual freedom of action it would not be worth attempting. Antisocial activities will be eliminated, but the field of constructive opportunity will be enlarged by this general polarization of endeavor. Greater freedom of action, broader scope for individual initiative, are among the major objectives of any rational effort, and to sacrifice them at the outset is to admit that our task is impossible before we start. Utopia by fiat is a contradiction in terms. Our better world will be built because men envision it, will it, unite without organization or compulsion to create it. Individual initiative will not be sacrificed: it will be focused on a common end through individual acceptance of a common standard of rightness.

We have the means for the task already in our hands. We have attempted here a tentative outline of the technique that must be applied to one important phase of the work—the phase of physical design. This would have been a too ambitious undertaking except for our deep conviction of the unity of all design—that we may learn from minor efforts how to accomplish major ones. The major efforts await our will. We believe we see this will clarifying, focusing, gathering up its mighty strength.

3. *Definitions*

H. W. FOWLER (1858-1933), famed for his collaboration with his brother F. G. Fowler (d. 1918), originally took up teaching and journalism after ground-work at Rugby and Oxford. Unconventional and whimsical "H. W." often practiced loafing, did not marry till he was fifty, and finally, when World War I broke out, enlisted (at 56) along with "F. G.," who died in France of tuberculosis. In addition to *The King's English*, a guide, and the classic reference work, *Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (famous for its wit as well as its scholarship), a multitude of various occupations kept Professor Fowler busy: working for *The Clarendon Press*, doing household chores, caring for his wife, cultivating a super-beard.

GENTEELISM

BY *genteelism* is here to be understood the substituting, for the ordinary natural word that first suggests itself to the mind, of a synonym that is thought to be less soiled by the lips of the common herd, less familiar, less plebeian, less vulgar, less improper, less apt to come unhandsomely betwixt the wind & our nobility. The truly genteel do not offer *beer*, but *ale*; invite one to *step*, not *come*, this way; take in not *lodgers*, but *paying guests*; send their boys not to *school*, but to *college*; never *help*, but *assist*, each other to potatoes; keep *stomachs* & *domestics* instead of *bellies* & *servants*; & have quite forgotten that they could ever have been guilty of *toothpowder* & *napkins* & *underclothing*, of *before* & *except* & *about*, where nothing now will do for them but *dentifrice*, *serviette*, *lingerie*, *ere*, *save*, *anent*.

The reader need hardly be warned that the inclusion of any particular word in the small selection of genteelisms offered below does not imply that that word should never be used. All or most of these, & of the hundreds that might be classed with them, have their proper uses, in which they are not genteel, but natural. *Ale* is at home in historical novels, *ere* & *save* in poetry, *mirrors* in marble halls, *the military* in riots, *dentifrices* in druggists' lists, & so forth; but out of such contexts, & in the conditions explained above, the taint of gentility is on them. To illustrate a little more in detail, "He went out without shutting the door" is plain English; with *closing* substituted for *shutting* it be-

"Genteelism," from *Modern English Usage*. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, The Clarendon Press.

comes genteel; nevertheless, to *close* the door is justified if more is implied than the mere not leaving it open:— “Before beginning his story, he crossed the room & closed the door,” i.e. placed it so as to obviate overhearing; “Six people sleeping in a small room with closed windows,” i.e. excluding air. Or again, “The schoolroom roof fell in, & two of the boys (*or* girls, *or* children) were badly injured”; *scholars* for boys &c. would be a genteelism, & a much more flagrant one than *closing* in the previous example; yet *scholar* is not an obsolete or archaic word; it is no longer the natural English for a schoolboy or schoolgirl, that is all.

The reader may now be left to the specimen list of genteelisms, which he will easily increase for himself. The point is that, when the word in the second column is the word of one's thought, one should not consent to displace it by the word in the first column unless an improvement in the meaning would result.

GENTEELISMS	NORMAL WORDS	GENTEELISMS	NORMAL WORDS
ale	beer	lady-dog	bitch
anent	about	lady help	servant
assist	help	lingerie	underclothing
carafe	water-bottle	military, the	soldiers
cease	stop	mirror	looking-glass
chiroprapist	corn-cutter	odour	smell
close	shut	paying guest	boarder
coal-vase	coal-scuttle	perspire, -ration	sweat
college	school	peruse	read
couch	sofa	place	put
dentifrice	toothpowder	preserve	jam
distingué	striking	proceed	go
domestic	servant	recreation	amusement
edifice	building	save	except
endeavour	try	scholar	boy &c.
ere	before	serviette	napkin
exclusive	select	step	come, go
expectorate	spit	stomach	belly
hither	here	sufficient	enough
inquire	ask	woolly	sweater
kinema	cinema	tipsy	drunk

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succession a lecturer in French in Queen's University, Ontario; Rockefeller Foundation Fellow in Linguistics; Assistant Director of the Harvard Commission on English Language Studies; and, more recently, Director of the English Language Center, Bogota, Colombia.

WHAT IS SEMANTICS?

Those obstinate questionings
Of sense.

WORDSWORTH, *Intimations of Immortality*.

SEMANTICS, or semasiology, is the study of the meaning of words. One cannot elaborate this bald introductory sentence without plunging forth-right into the subject matter of the study itself. Semantics shows how most of our words each have many meanings; and the word "semantics" itself—the name of the study of "the meaning of meaning"—is no exception. Some writers on "semantics" deal with very different matters from those which will be discussed under that name in this book. For example, Alfred Korzybski's book on General Semantics, *Science and Sanity*, enters the fields of anthropology, biology, botany, "conditional" (conditioned) reflexes, education, entomology, genetics, mathematics, logic, mathematical physics, neurology, ophthalmology, physics, physiology, and psychiatry. This grand tour tends to neglect those areas which I would regard as central.

On the other hand, some authorities who write about what I would call semantics call it by another name. Charles W. Morris, in his valuable monograph on semantics, *The Foundations of the Theory of Signs*, divides his general subject ("semiotic"—"semantics" to us) into three aspects, which he names "semantics," "pragmatics," and "syntactics." Morris gives a narrower range of meaning to "semantics" than will be given here.

When this elusive word is examined more closely, further perplexities are revealed. The topics of semantics begin to unfold. To take examples from one or two lines of thought:

The student of semantics studies words. When he tries to talk about "semantics," he uses words to talk about a word which itself talks about nothing but words. Is not this like trying to lift himself by his bootstraps? Following his example, can we expect to do anything but tie ourselves in knots? Presumably "semantics" is the name of something; but what sort of thing is it the name "of"? "Of" other words? Then what are *they* "of"? What is it—this naming relation, this property of being "of" another thing? This line of thought will oblige us to consider the Triangle of Reference, and the nature of the symbol-situation.

Again, some people talk very glibly about "semantics" when they have only

"What Is Semantics?" from *Semantics* by Hugh Walpole. Published by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

the ghost of a notion of what they are talking about. When such a person discusses "semantics" with a specialist in linguistics, are the two people really using the same word? Again we are led to the symbol-situation, and to the distinction between Symbols and Signs.

Further, a word like "semantics" seems to lend itself to a greater and more diverse variety of interpretations and misinterpretations than does a simple proper name like John Elgar Smith, or a simple general name like "house," or "flag." Why are some words more slippery than others? This question would take us far, into the consideration of the functions of language as well as of Contexts and Fictions.

Semantics is at present to be regarded as an exploration rather than a science, which rewards its students with a skill rather than a body of subject matter. Characteristic of the "semantic skill" are two important linguistic habits:

1. A constant awareness of the importance of context.
2. The practice of multiple definition.

"Context" is a word one generally uses vaguely. The meaning of a symbol depends on its context; and the student of semantics must recognize three kinds of contexts.

Multiple definition is a technique for controlling the shifts and ambiguities of words. It is, as Dr. Richards says, the habit "of accompanying any definition or distinction we make use of with a set of rival definitions in the background of the mind." Explicitly, it is the practice of distinguishing as many as possible of the different shades of meaning of a troublesome or interesting word, and of defining each nuance.

Let "case" provide a simple example. It has different senses in: "a case of diphtheria," "the case for birth control," "in case of fire." One could begin a multiple definition of "case" on the basis of these three phrases alone.

1. A case is an example of a disease.
2. A case is a group of arguments in support of a belief.
3. A case is an event.

The reader who wishes really to understand a word, because it is focal to some discussion, or to a subject in which he is interested, will find that the practice of multiple definition will make him understand it far better than will a dictionary. Dictionary entries are too crude to be of much help in working out the finer points of semantics.

There are three steps in the process of multiple definition. First, one collects examples of different uses of the word, in their contexts. Secondly, one sorts out what seem to be "separate senses" and defines each sense. Lastly, one scans this list of different senses, which forms a map of the word, and considers how each sense is related to the totality of senses. This last operation is neglected by amateur semanticists, especially those who use semantics to "debunk." "This word we are using has three, or a dozen, or a score of different meanings. So it doesn't really *mean* anything; and what can we do about it?" Semantics of this odor is cheap and unprofitable. Useful words are like planets: they cannot fly around at will; they follow definite courses. Shifts of meaning occur in definite patterns.

Meaning-shift is of vital importance in the study of semantics. Typical patterns will be exemplified throughout this book. One other point may be mentioned here. Suppose one were examining "case," and had included its use as the name of a receptacle—"a case of beer." There would be no room for the case of beer in the process of putting the word together again. The history of this sort of case (which differs etymologically from the others), as well as its discordant sense, proves that it is inappropriate. That is the difference between a pun and an interesting shift of meaning. The punning word is an alien.

Thus far I have tried to show that semantics calls for a flexibility of mind, a sort of ability to call a spade a rose, which is not demanded by more formal subjects. This flexibility is demanded of the student before he can grasp the significance of semantics. After some study, he learns why it is as necessary in everyday life as in semasiology. One's tolerance need not depend upon emotional effort; it should rest upon intellectual conviction.

SEMANTICIANS

The history of semantics is both long and short. Perhaps it is now beginning to emerge as a science; and every science had its origins in philosophy. Some of the subject matter of semantics is as old as man, and most of it is as old as philosophy. The works of some philosophers have already been appraised for their value to the new study, but there must be a wealth of philosophical material which has not yet been exploited.

Jeremy Bentham's contributions to semantic theory have been especially important. They have been exhaustively examined and utilized by C. K. Ogden. *Psyche*, Mr. Ogden's linguistic and psychological journal, has reviewed the linguistic contributions of philosophers from Bacon and Berkeley to Peirce, Husserl, and Carnap. Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Kant, Hegel, Bradley, and many other philosophers are rich in material which has not yet paid its toll to semantics.

But "semantics" as a word did not exist until this century. In 1900 it appeared as the title of the translation of Michel Bréal's *Essai de sémantique*. Lady Welby referred to it in her article on "Significs" in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. She complained that Bréal nowhere gave a "precise definition" of the word. "The term 'Significs,'" wrote Lady Welby, "may be defined as the science of meaning or the study of significance, provided sufficient recognition is given to its practical aspect as a method of mind, one which is involved in all forms of mental activity, including that of logic. . . . Significs includes 'Semantics,' a branch of study which was formally introduced and expounded in 1897 by Michel Bréal, the distinguished French philologist, in his *Essai de sémantique*."

The history of semantics lies in the future. It plays an essential role in H. G. Wells's *Shape of Things to Come*. "An interesting and valuable group of investigators," wrote Mr. Wells in one chapter, "appeared first in a rudimentary form in the nineteenth century. The leader of this group was a certain

Lady Welby, who was frankly considered by most of her contemporaries as an unintelligible bore. She corresponded copiously with all who would attend to her, harping perpetually on the idea that language could be made more exactly expressive, that there should be a 'Science of Significs.' C. K. Ogden and a fellow Fellow of Magdalene College, I. A. Richards, were among the few who took her seriously. These two produced a book, *The Meaning of Meaning*, in 1923 which counts as one of the earliest attempts to improve the language mechanism."

A BETTER DEFINITION OF "SEMANTICS"

Semantics is best described by the kinds of questions it asks. You and I already have our own opinions on semantics—everyone has. We could not talk or think without having them. Semantics as a study inspects certain questions and examines, explicitly, the assumptions with which we usually answer them. Socrates had a way of asking any people he met certain questions; and before they knew it they were deep in philosophical argument. This was the Greek philosopher's method of showing men what they really thought. Many of his acquaintances would change their opinions after Socrates had made them face the assumptions on which those opinions were based.

A cluster of questions about words might be posed by a modern Socrates: What can we learn without language? Does an animal interpret a word in anything like the same way we do?

When we say that semantics is "the study of the meanings of words," what do we *mean* by "meanings"? And what is a word? Is "postal telegram" two words? Is "postman" only one word? And what about "post-office"—one or two? Is "not" a word? If so, is the "im" in "improbable"? Is "like" a word? If so, is "sheeplike" two words? And how many words is "sheepishly"?

Who decides how many words there are in "mailbox" or "mail-box" or "mail box"? Can such a question be settled absolutely, or does it depend on different points of view, or upon different definitions of the word "word"?

Suppose we decide that "word," at least, is a word. Of what does the word consist? Black marks on paper? Impressions on a reader's eyes? Movements of somebody's vocal apparatus? A disturbance of the air? A vibration in the eardrums? A thought in somebody's "mind"? Many different thoughts in many different minds? Or is it none of these things, but simply a "meaning"? If so, why do we need a special word for "meaning"?

In their professional use of language, do scientists, salesmen, businessmen, poets, politicians, clergymen use language for different purposes? If so, can we distinguish these separate functions and use the knowledge to improve our own expressiveness?

Do people often use metaphors without knowing it?

Is it silly to use abstract words? Can we dispense with them?

Can we think of a single one of our activities that would not be carried on more intelligently if we had a better understanding of how language works?

What will happen to the world if more and more of its educational systems

train their scholars to distinguish informative utterances from utterances whose purpose it is to exhort, or to suggest, or to mystify, or to hypnotize? What will happen if they do not?

Reflection upon these questions is the best way I can think of to begin the study of semantics. This subject has its own logic, and its own functions, which are concerned less with accumulated facts than with the refinement of capacities and knowledge which we all possess. Semantics is a "workout" rather than a subject.

THE USEFULNESS OF SEMANTICS

In the past few years, semantics has caught the interest of the general public. And the general public shows a sound instinct. Semantics is a very practical business. The common-sense aspect of it renders it as appealing to the man in the street as to the scholar. Whatever his trade, any serious reader may expect the study of semantics to profit him in three ways.

He will understand better what he hears and reads.

The average man cannot grasp what he hears. Massive psychological evidence in support of this contention would only confirm what our worldly-wise knowledge of scandal and rumor and propaganda tells us already. Considering the famous Martian broadcast incident alone, we would be justified in concluding that we are not perfectly equipped to interpret the evidence of our ears. That involuntary hoax was startlingly effective. Every quarter of an hour, the invasion was halted while an announcer told the audience that this was only a play. A twiddle of the dial either way would immediately have put the listener in auditory contact with more pacific performers, including Messrs. Bergen and McCarthy. At the end of the play, the audience was again reassured by Mr. Orson Welles himself: "If your doorbell rings and nobody's there, that was no Martian—it's Hallowe'en!" Yet, immediately afterwards, thousands of people were pouring forth along the roads and streets of New Jersey with wet cloths over their faces. A professor took his torch and geologist's hammer and journeyed out in search of meteorites.

Less spectacular samples of serious misunderstanding happen every day. A recent breakdown in communication took place among a learned committee whose very task it was to diagnose such breakdowns. The committee was listening to the reading of a report. In a certain phrase came the word "di-sent," which I must give in its phonetic spelling. When the whole thing had been read, a certain member of the committee said that this word had puzzled him. "When you spoke of 'our common di-sent from the tyrannies of Europe,'" he asked, "was that word d-e-s-c-e-n-t or d-i-s-s-e-n-t?" They found the place, and the whole committee went into committee over the word. But they could not agree which it should be, either from the look of the word on paper or from its meaning in its context.

We are no better at understanding what we read. "Retarded children" have a strong representation in the primary grades of our schools. Our educational curricula are cluttered with courses in "remedial reading." Nor do these meas-

ures for curing the misinterpretators seem very successful, for similar disabilities are found in every high school and every university. This is no place to go into detailed evidence, but the reader who consults the published works of E. G. Biaggini, William Gray, and I. A. Richards will be convinced that befuddled reading goes on on a grand scale in the colleges and universities of Australia, the United States, and England.

Semantics, which shows why words are coined and how they function, is a remedy. The thoughtful educator should give it a chance, whether he is concerned to improve himself or to teach his classes to read better.

He will talk and write more effectively.

Misinterpretation is only half the fault of the listener. Semantics will help speakers and writers to see why misunderstanding occurs. Familiarity with the nature of the symbol-situation should teach the speaker the difference between speech and verbosity. His study of Fictions will show him how to use simpler language when it is appropriate; and practice with the Theory of Definition will increase his skill in communicating his thoughts to a particular audience. He will be better able to convince and persuade when he understands the workings of Metaphor, and when he realizes the different jobs an utterance can do.

He will think more accurately.

This is most important of all. Now, more than ever, men need to foster and strengthen their own powers of keen and unflurried thought. They need greater powers; and they stand in danger of losing such powers as they have. Countries are at war in all five continents. Aggressive leaders, directing totally organized forces, are trying to kill the possibility of ordinary men ever being men again.

And today a world at peace would still be a world in danger. Our minds have not kept pace with the almost inconceivable changes in our physical means of transport and communication. Less than fifty years has seen the birth of the Diesel engine, the airplane, moving pictures, wireless telegraphy, radio, telephotography, and television. The earth shrinks rapidly under our feet. A period of time which a century ago would have been consumed while the Londoner was traveling to Bath is now sufficient to take the New Yorker to Moscow. And we no longer have to go to a place in order to hear it—to see it, even. Soon everyone will have the possibility of almost instantaneous communication with everyone else on earth. Two thousand million pairs of ears and eyes, ripe to be swayed; and the forces that want to sway them will not bother to pause every fifteen minutes to warn their audience not to take them literally.

The time will come when educators will co-operate in the task of arming their peoples against the dangers of misreading and half-hearing. That, perhaps, must wait for the suppression of those riding masters who sweat to be conquerors. In the meantime the individual will try to clarify his own thoughts, to "cultivate his own garden." Semantics will help him to think more accurately because, by showing how words and thoughts are connected, it helps one to draw the line between verbal and mental problems. He will

be less *dependent* on words, better able to concentrate on thoughts, whatever their verbal clothing.

DONALD HOUGH—*author of Snow Above Town—was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1895. Up to 1932 he had contributed, sometimes under a pen name, dozens of sketches to such magazines as Sunset, Open Road, and Field & Stream. His trail goes dim at this point. When last heard from (autobiographical report in The Saturday Evening Post, 1944), Hough was an Army officer whose function in the supply branch of service was finding everything from ping-pong balls to blankets for thousands of G.I.'s.*

THE COWBOY

BECAUSE the cowboy stands in the unique position of being the only existing symbol of the most distinctive and intriguing era of America's settlement and organization, still romanticized in magazines, books, and the movies, a vague impression persists that he still is a hard-riding, straight-shooting, rustler-hanging swashbuckler, and a wild-eyed reveler.

But even in those early days all who dressed alike were not cowboys. Then, as now, his job was that of a herder of cattle; and if he had to solve his problems in such manner as seemed most likely to succeed at the moment, so did the pioneer farmer, miner, lumberman, trapper, financier, and all of the other combatants in the free-for-all battle for the natural resources of the country.

That era is long past, but, unlike so many of his contemporaries of that day, the cowboy not only has not faded out of the picture, but has increased, and wears the same uniform. There are more cowboys in the West today than ever before: a fact which is manifest, since a greater population eats more meat and behind every steak and chop and roast there is a cowboy. He is an integral part of the national economic organization; no tractors, no machines, can do his job; in handling animals, only one means of locomotion is practical: another animal.

I do not wish, by setting down a lot of obvious facts, to insult the intelligence of such readers as may have got this far, but if you don't mind, and just for the sake of the record, I'd like to sketch in the current cowboy.

To begin with, the average cowboy, rather than facing life—and the sunset—with his cayuse Pal, doesn't own a horse at all. When he is on the move he goes by car or on foot, and when on the job he uses horses that belong to the ranch. Hands established on a ranch may appropriate, or even own, a favorite horse, but by and large the cowboy, who is basically a farmhand, no more would think of applying for a job astride his personal horse than a farmhand

"The Cowboy," from *Snow Above Town* by Donald Hough. Published by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

would with his own plow, a hayworker with his pet pitchfork, a lumberjack with his own axe.

His personal possessions consist of a saddle and a bedroll, perhaps a pet rope. If he has them. The saddle helps him get jobs, and he will relinquish it in a poker game with great reluctance, yet quicker than he will his bedroll, which not only also helps him get jobs, but is a mighty handy thing to have even if—particularly if—he has no job.

Cowboys do not know how to fire a six-shooter. Most of them never have seen one. They used to wear revolvers for much the same reason as those that prompted early-day farmers to carry a scythe over one shoulder and a blunderbuss over the other when they went to work in their fields. Their herds now are protected by the cops, and as for settling personal differences, this is done by the maneuver which during the war the French regarded with such a horrified awe: the simple American *coup de main*, or bar-room wallop.

The cowboy's status as a horseman, while adequate to the occasion, is open to serious question. It is safe to say that in the eyes of, for example, a United States Army cavalry officer, he is a great deal less than an able exponent of the art. He rides without grace or style, any old way that seems a good idea at the moment. He likes to ride at a jog or lope, seldom has occasion to move at a full gallop, and when his horse trots he gets a pained expression upon his face and sits down in the saddle and takes it, or posts, or grasps the horse's mane, or stands up in the stirrups and supports himself by resting his hands upon the pommel, or invents combinations of these, often shifting from one to the other in rapid succession.

Riding is a part of his work, a necessary evil. He never is reluctant to dismount.

The roundup is the most spectacular phase of his work, and ninety-five per cent of this is done at a slow walk. The average picture of a cowhand on the job is that of a bored young man sitting listlessly in the saddle, smoking a cigarette, his mind on the bunkhouse or some babe.

He needs, and uses, riding skill in cutting out, and in calf roping. Roping calves and branding them on the range is a normal activity in the Southwest, where the distances between blades of grass are so great that small herds may spread over a large area, but in the North almost all calf branding and dehorning is done in chutes. A great part of the cowboy's work consists in mending fences, haying, cutting wood, feeding stock, training horses, repairing corrals, and such other wild undertakings.

His most obvious distinction is the fact that his is the only group in the United States identifiable on sight by reason of its clothes: the only approach to folk-dress, sectional or occupational uniform, that we know in this country. In this connection, it is important to know that the fetching ensemble which is the badge of his trade comes straight from the requirements of his job and the vicissitudes of his environment: its picturesque aspects are largely accidental, and the cowboy of the movies is not so far removed from his cousin of the ranges, in point of dress, as is popularly supposed.

His chaps, for example, are in many respects and in many places the most essential article of dress or equipment (whether chaps are an item of clothing

or a part of the saddle is an open question). The ordinary pair of chaps are made of heavy leather with wings extending toward the rear on the outside of each leg. They have a minor function of reducing friction between the rider's legs and his saddle and stirrup leathers, but their major purpose is to serve as a leather apron to shed sharp brush, cactus, dead branches, bark of trees, and similar objects that otherwise would tear the stoutest pair of pants to shreds in no time at all under certain riding conditions.

Another kind of chaps are those covered with long Angora wool, sometimes left white but other times dyed black or in colors. These are made for cold weather only and are for warmth and nothing else. They are rapidly losing favor, as the leather ones serve all purposes satisfactorily. Why these wool chaps are shown upon cowboys in the Southwest—where they would soon be given a neat haircut by the sharp brush and cactus—in magazine illustrations and in the movies, is beyond my province or ability to explain.

The cowboy's hat is tall and broad-brimmed; it protects against both the heat and glare of desert or high-altitude sun, sheds the rain which must not hinder its wearer in his work, and is used upon occasion as a flag for turning horses or cattle when riding herd. The neckerchief, at first glance, appears to be entirely on the ornamental side, but this is true only to the extent that if you are going to wear a neckerchief, it is just as well to have some color in it. While it has grown into a sort of dude-catcher as magnified and employed by the summer boys, it is a standard item of cowboy equipment: tied across the mouth in dust storms, and in cold weather passed over the head beneath the hat, and tied under the chin, as a protection for the ears. The broad belt, frequently ornamented, is more than a device for holding up the pants: it helps keep the insides in place against the jar of riding; and even the broader band of leather, metal-studded for extra stiffness, which often is worn just above the belt serves a similarly useful purpose.

The cowhand's pants are built especially for him. They are made of tough blue denim, and copper-riveted at points of strain. They are built snug about the hips partly so that when the wearer is in the saddle the friction of riding will come between the pants and the saddle, not between the pants and the human skin, and partly because the cowboy is slim about the hips himself: a posterior slenderness which is his main physical characteristic, for a stock saddle is the enemy of surplus meat. The pants are tapered in the legs, to facilitate tucking the ends into boot tops.

The boots are a perfect implement of the trade. In riding, the cowboy does not balance himself on the balls of his feet in the stirrup, as the custom is in fancy equitation, but thrusts his boots all the way in and takes a strangle hold with his instep. Hence the high heels. But these heels are not only high, they taper from the rear, coming almost to a point, and again we have a reason: when it comes to holding a roped animal, on foot, nothing is quite so convenient as those sharp heels, dug into the earth.

How about the cowboy himself?

He is a gentle, soft-spoken, mild-mannered individual, and—allowing for

the inevitable exceptions—as tame a celebrator, when in town, as perhaps could be found among any large group of workers. The Western bar, filled with cowboys, undoubtedly is quieter than the city bar in the vicinity of factories or mines or other centers of manual labor. In these latter, drinking takes on the nature of sudden escape from intolerable monotony in the daily work, work that offers no compensations within itself, plus escape from an environment that often is despised and certainly never is loved.

The cowboy has no need for this release.

He looks upon his work, not as a job, but as a way of life—as indicated, for example, by the fact that his idea of dressing up is not to shed the garments of his trade, but to accentuate and refine them. He is aware of his country, revels in its beauty, and this consciousness of it is a living part of him. He likes to drink, he loves to gamble, the saloon is his headquarters when he is in town; he gets drunk, sometimes he raises hell, but always for fun, never for escape: never brutally, seldom for sheer drunkenness in itself.

He is a gentle guy.

That is his main characteristic. More than a symbol of the West, he is the incarnation of its whole spirit: a spirit, by the way, which dominates a very large slice of the American continent.

FRED B. MILLETT *was born in Brockton, Massachusetts, in 1890. His life has been spent in universities: He received an A.B. from Amherst and a Ph.D. from Chicago; in addition he has studied at, and received honorary degrees from, an imposing list of representative colleges. Having held various teaching appointments since 1912, he settled finally at Wesleyan (Conn.), where he has been on the faculty since 1939. Author of texts on British and American literature, Professor Millett has developed a rare humanism in teaching which he seems to have learned in part from ideal faculty-student relationships. All will not agree with his thesis in *The Rebirth of Liberal Education*; nevertheless, this work, like Jacques Barzun's recent *Teacher in America*, poses questions and offers survey results which no traditionalist can safely disregard.*

TYPES OF TEACHERS

ACADEMICIANS in the field of the humanities may be distinguished, not merely in terms of their departmental allegiances but by their temperamental preoccupations and aptitudes. A simple and possibly suggestive classification on this second scale is as scholars, esthetes, and teachers. The scholar is characterized by his preoccupation with research and the meth-

"Types of Teachers," from *The Rebirth of Liberal Education* by Fred B. Millett, Copyright, 1945, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

ods of research, with the accumulation of material and its systematic presentation with serried footnotes and with bibliographies listing his authorities. At his best, he is moved by one of the noblest of motives—the passion for extending the bounds of knowledge; at his worst, he is a pedant, immersed in minutiae, hopelessly lost in the eternal process of collecting and arranging material, and progressively incapable of putting his accumulated material to any significant use. A variation on the scholarly type in the field of the humanities is the scientific linguist, who treats words as though they were the scattered bones of some prehistoric animal and is utterly impotent of the god-like function of breathing life into those bones and making them live. The linguist is beautifully adapted, by temperament and preoccupation, to his place in the lowest circle of the academic inferno.

At the opposite end of the scale of humanistic types is the esthetic group—the pure esthete, the artist *manqué*, and the true artist. Of the members of this group, the first—the esthete—is the more common. He is the individual with the temperament but without the creative power of the genuine artist. He is much more likely than the genuine artist to call attention to his estheticism by eccentricities of dress or manner that strike his nonesthetic colleagues as “affected” but that are actually natural expressions of his taste and temperament. His characteristic response to life and the arts is not scholarly or scientific or philosophical but esthetic. Whether his taste be good or bad, he is likely to manifest widely ranging interests in the arts generally and to attempt in his teaching to impart something of his own enthusiasm for his mistress, Beauty, to the more sensitive members of his student-audience. Though he may be intellectually shallow, unrigorously critical, and too easily appreciative, he frequently furnishes his department a valuable corrective to the scholarly and historical preoccupations of his colleagues. He, at least, never loses sight of the important consideration that the humanities are, or ought to be, primarily “value-subjects,” and that the practitioner who is faithful to them must ever be concerned with the elucidation, revelation, and communication of values.

A close approximation to the esthete is the artist *manqué*. The chief difference between them is that the former is usually untroubled by an urge to creative work and the latter not only has it but is troubled, if not tormented, by it. He is a man who would be an imaginative writer, musician, painter, or sculptor if he had been endowed with a little more creative drive and a good deal more creative imagination. The esthete is happy in his uncreative estheticism; the artist *manqué* bears the burden of permanent frustration. He circumvents the burden least successfully when he goes on—while youth and hope last—writing unpublishable novels or painting ignominiously bad or at least not quite good paintings. He circumvents his burden most successfully perhaps when he devotes his insight and imagination and understanding of the process of successful artistic fruition to the work of criticism. In this field—if he is not biased and embittered by his own lack of success—he may achieve not only an *Ersatz*-creation but a genuine creation, for in the eyes of time high-minded and scrupulous criticism is only slightly less important and meaningful than the work of creation.

The genuine artist is perhaps the most easily distinguishable of the three esthetic types. He may manifest few or no external stigmata of the esthetic temperament; he may look and talk like an insurance salesman; he may be conspicuously inexpressive or incessantly voluble. The only essential among the differentiae is his creativeness. The only sure basis of his recognition is his work, and when his productivity ends—for external or subjective reasons—he is, in the strict meaning of the term, no longer an artist.

Of these three esthetic types, the one that is most likely to be the most gifted in teaching is the esthete. He is not distracted, as the artist *manqué* is, by the creative itch, nor is he seized, as the true artist is, by the compulsion to create, no matter what the opposing circumstances. As an acolyte or high priest of Art, he can render his most effective service to her by making converts to her, by snatching brands from the consuming fires of unawareness and insensitivity, of ignorance and provincialism. In the field of English, particularly, and possibly in the fine arts generally, the artist *manqué* is perhaps most effective pedagogically in teaching the practical elements in the arts, whether writing or painting or musical composition. The effectiveness of the true artist as teacher is by no means dependent on his productivity or the quality of his productivity as an artist. Of the skills and processes that make his artistic productions distinguished he may be unaware or at least incapable of expression and communication. The artist's chief contribution to the academic community—and it is an extremely important one—is the example given by his presence of the actual contemporary creative process, of the absorption of an adult and gifted personality in the process of creation, of the fact—obvious but frequently ignored by academic historians and scholars—that the arts did not come to an end in 1500, 1800, or even 1914, but that their creation goes on, in fair weather and foul, significantly or insignificantly. The artist in the academic community is the most conspicuous symbol of the endlessness of the living process of artistic creation, a challenging witness to the fact that art is a way of making and a medium of vision and insight and wisdom, and not merely subject matter for historical and scientific scrutiny, or defenseless material to be used in the manufacture of theses and scholarly articles.

To be distinguished alike from the scholarly and the artistic types is the "born" teacher, the person who flourishes only in his relations with students in and out of the classroom, who expresses himself most potently in his devotion to the fine art of teaching, who, at his best, achieves something of the artist's creativeness in his skill in bringing about a vital relationship between the student and what the student is learning or being taught. If the esthete is marked by some of the characteristics of the artist, the "born" teacher is distinguished by some of the characteristics of the actor on the one hand, and the preacher on the other. Like the actor, he is gifted in platform skills; his personality is so plastic that it is possible for him to achieve a temporary and more or less perfect identification of himself with the subject or person that he is discussing. He handles his voice effectively; he may even become famous—as "Copey" of Harvard did—as a public reader. He is sensitive to the reactions of his audience, knows how to play upon them, is able to make effective patterns and juxtapositions of the personalities in his audience-group. Like the

actor, he has a sense of timing, a flair for the effective use of properties, a wide range of tones from the casual and inconsequential to the ironical and the dramatic. But the true teacher is less self-centered than the actor, more genuinely outgoing, more personally distinct. Although, like the actor with the text of the play, he uses the subject matter of his field as his raw material for his performance, the born teacher feels not only an esthetic but a moral responsibility to the subject matter with which he is working and also to the audience to whom he is presenting this subject matter. In this respect, he more closely resembles the preacher than the actor. Ultimately, he is concerned with bringing light and leading to his charges, with saving them from the sins of ignorance and prejudice, with enriching their lives with knowledge and wisdom. Like the true pastor, he is a "cure of souls." He is concerned with his students not as minds, but as men, not as points on the sliding scale of intellectual achievements, but as human beings with personalities that are curiously complex blends of assets and liabilities, that are bundles of potentialities. Like the pastor, he furnishes—sometimes unwittingly—a kind of norm for behavior and manners, a model, however imperfect, of devotion to the nobler ends of which the human animal dreams and in the attainment of which he is—perhaps fitfully—engaged.

4. *Comparisons*

VANNEVAR BUSH (*b. 1890*), *who has taught at Tufts and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has done research work for the government and private corporations, and is now President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, is known for an imposing catalogue of scientific achievement, including his important contribution to the perfecting of the atomic bomb.*

THE BUILDERS

THE PROCESS by which the boundaries of knowledge are advanced, and the structure of organized science is built, is a complex process indeed. It corresponds fairly well with the exploitation of a difficult quarry for its building materials and the fitting of these into an edifice; but there are very significant differences. First, the material itself is exceedingly

"The Builders." Reprinted by permission of *The Technology Review*, edited at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Copyright, 1945, *The Technology Review*.

varied, hidden and overlaid with relatively worthless rubble, and the process of uncovering new facts and relationships has some of the attributes of prospecting and exploration rather than of mining or quarrying. Second, the whole effort is highly unorganized. There are no direct orders from architect or quartermaster. Individuals and small bands proceed about their businesses unimpeded and uncontrolled, digging where they will, working over their material, and tucking it into place in the edifice.

Finally, the edifice itself has a remarkable property, for its form is predestined by the laws of logic and the nature of human reasoning. It is almost as though it had once existed, and its building blocks had then been scattered, hidden, and buried, each with its unique form retained so that it would fit only in its own peculiar position, and with the concomitant limitation that the blocks cannot be found or recognized until the building of the structure has progressed to the point where their position and form reveal themselves to the discerning eye of the talented worker in the quarry. Parts of the edifice are being used while construction proceeds, by reason of the applications of science, but other parts are merely admired for their beauty and symmetry, and their possible utility is not in question.

In these circumstances it is not at all strange that the workers sometimes proceed in erratic ways. There are those who are quite content, given a few tools, to dig away unearthing odd blocks, piling them up in the view of fellow workers, and apparently not caring whether they fit anywhere or not. Unfortunately there are also those who watch carefully until some industrious group digs out a particularly ornamental block; whereupon they fit it in place with much gusto, and bow to the crowd. Some groups do not dig at all, but spend all their time arguing as to the exact arrangement of a cornice or an abutment. Some spend all their days trying to pull down a block or two that a rival has put in place. Some, indeed, neither dig nor argue, but go along with the crowd, scratch here and there, and enjoy the scenery. Some sit by and give advice, and some just sit.

On the other hand there are those men of rare vision who can grasp well in advance just the block that is needed for rapid advance on a section of the edifice to be possible, who can tell by some subtle sense where it will be found, and who have an uncanny skill in cleaning away dross and bringing it surely into the light. These are the master workmen. For each of them there can well be many of lesser stature who chip and delve, industriously, but with little grasp of what it is all about, and who nevertheless make the great steps possible.

There are those who can give the structure meaning, who can trace its evolution from early times, and describe the glories that are to be, in ways that inspire those who work and those who enjoy. They bring the inspiration that not all is mere building of monotonous walls, and that there is architecture even though the architect is not seen to guide and order.

There are those who labor to make the utility of the structure real, to cause it to give shelter to the multitude, that they may be better protected, and that they may derive health and well-being because of its presence.

And the edifice is not built by the quarrymen and the masons alone. There are those who bring them food during their labors, and cooling drink when the days are warm, who sing to them, and place flowers on the little walls that have grown with the years.

There are also the old men, whose days of vigorous building are done, whose eyes are too dim to see the details of the arch or the needed form of its keystone, but who have built a wall here and there, and lived long in the edifice; who have learned to love it and who have even grasped a suggestion of its ultimate meaning; and who sit in the shade and encourage the young men.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN *Brought up with the roar of the Maine surf in his ears, Robert P. Tristram Coffin (b. 1892) went to Bowdoin, and thence to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. During the first World War, he served abroad in an artillery regiment. After teaching some years at Wells College, he returned to Bowdoin as Professor of English. Both his prose and poetry are concerned primarily with the traditions of the sea and the Maine farms that border the sea. In the following essay; however, he draws some interesting comparisons between the English and ourselves, his impressions of the former having been gathered in the best possible way—by living among them.*

WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE ARE WE?

BEFORE we start rearranging the rest of the world after this war, we had better find out what kind of people we are ourselves. Nations and families often do not know what they are like until some outsider, say an aunt, comes along and tells them.

I had a New England aunt whose chief business in life was telling our family our strong points and our weak points, especially our weak. She came twice a year and straightened us all out, with herb remedies and moral precepts. Some of our worst features, we discovered from Aunt Emma, were minor habits that gave a wrong impression of us to the outside world.

Minor peculiarities and odd ways of doing things can exasperate one's neighbors more than major sins. It has always been so among nations, since history began. The old Akkadians mortally estranged the people of Ur by wearing beards. The people of Ur ate fat meat, and the Akkadians hated them for that habit and did their best to exterminate them. Underneath these superficial differences these nations had many sterling traits in common. And

"What Kind of People Are We?" from *The American Mercury*, November, 1943. Reprinted by permission.

if they had been able to see these, they would have built up a civilization that would have defied the Chaldeans and Babylonians for centuries. But they could not see their common humanity for the whiskers and fat meat. So they fought each other and perished. And the Babylonians and Chaldeans—who wore whiskers and ate fat meat also, by the way—came and possessed their lands.

It is good to have a chance to see ourselves through other nations' eyes. For maybe we Americans have some ways of doing things that conceal our good points from our neighbors across the water. If it isn't whiskers, maybe it is something just as obscuring.

I have been lucky. Twice I have lived for long periods in countries oversea and so have been able to get a perspective on Americans I never would have got in any other way. First time, it was France, and I was a soldier, in World War I. It was a terrific shock to me to discover what the French thought of their American allies. It wasn't the grownup French who shocked me. They were too polite and careful of my feelings. It was the French children—girls in black dresses and boys in pinafores so you couldn't be sure they were boys till they turned around and showed they had a fork in their clothes after all. The French children thought all Americans were gluttons, drunkards, and overgrown boys. Not just one or another of these, but all three. That was their frank opinion. And nobody can be franker than children. Or wiser. Mind you, the French children loved the American soldiers. That was partly why they were so frank. They always poured out and got underfoot when our band played, and they shared all our meals with us while we were in their villages. I ate many a meal with a pair of Gallic breeches, yearning to be filled, straddling each of my knees.

I know why those French children thought us all gluttons and drunkards and boys. They trusted their eyes. To their eyes we were all three. For we were not used to their wine. A drink that a five-year-old French boy could swallow without batting a brunette eyelash knocked the strong blond men in my regiment galley-west. Therefore all Americans were habitually flattened by drink. And we had meat three times a day in our mess. The French children saw it with their own beady eyes. They helped us eat it. French people had meat only once or twice a week. Therefore Americans were all gluttons. And we played with the French children as their fathers and older brothers and uncles never did. We came down to their level and played tag and pitched pennies with them. With only a few of their words, we got on with them splendidly. So all Americans must be overgrown boys.

Out of those three French impressions, two are grounded upon superficialities. But the third is pure gold. We *are* a nation of people who can play easily with our children. We play more with our children than any other people on earth except maybe the Chinese. That is one of the greatest achievements of our civilization and one of our best assets as a nation. I see by the pictures from Sicily that American doughboys are still taking children on their knees and feeding them and teaching them to smile again in spite of war. We discovered children in our pioneer days, when they were the most important

crop that men who had states to settle could raise. We go on paying a lot of attention to that crop. We should thank those French children for calling our attention to our wealth.

2

Then I had a chance to set up housekeeping, when my wife and I were brand-new to each other, in England. It was in a village eight hundred years old. My wife and I got to know everybody in it from Schoolmistress Bley to the Lady of the Manor and on to the red-faced man who swept the street clean with a fagot-broom and slept an hour each noon on his wheelbarrow under our cottage window. We cooked over an open hearth. We played whist and tennis at the Village Institute. We kept hens and part of a pig. We got to know a lot about the English, and they got to know a lot about us in return. For though I was in the University, I was also a father and a householder and so got to know the older and younger English people who are outside the University family. Older English people are a revelation in warmth, after the rather icy undergraduates. The English mellow late. My wife and I got a thorough education in British democracy such as only those who buy their own breakfast kippers and keep their own house can acquire.

It is what the English taught us about ourselves that I want to talk about.

Of course, after a year or so of being neighbors to us, our English friends took to regarding us as creatures very much like themselves. It came as a surprise to them that fundamentally we were like them. It was amazing, but we were. It makes me think of what one small Englishman, in breeches only as long as a man's hand, said of our first baby. He had been let out of school, in company with all his schoolmates, to see an American infant. And he was bitterly disappointed. I heard him voicing his disappointment under our cottage window. "Why," said he to another boy, "it's just like any baby!" He had expected a swarthy papoose, with feathers and a tomahawk maybe. The pink and gold skin and hair had been a great shock.

But it was because our neighbors did come to regard us as much the same kind of people as themselves that they became sharp enough to notice and frank enough to tell us what it was that they found in Americans that was fundamentally different from characteristics that are English. And no one can be franker than a cousin, when he gets to know you.

First off, the English agreed with the French children. We paid too much attention to our children. They saw my wife and me with our first-born. They caught me bathing it. They caught me wheeling my first-born in a pram. They caught us building our future life around that infant of ours. It was not an incident. It was a future. So they told us that Americans humor children too much, play with them too much, dress them too well, keep them at home too long—especially if they are boys—and work their fingers to the bone to build security for them. It was too bad. Life went by and left parents just parents.

Guilty, say I! And I am sure most Americans would be proud to plead

guilty, too. If Americans overdo things, it is in the best of causes. Children are the most real of real property. My father had ten, and he slaved all his life as a free man, and had a righteous good time, educating us and building a house or fixing up a farm for each one of us. Of course, none of us living has needed the inheritance. We have been too busy acquiring farms and houses for our own offspring, who probably won't need them.

Our English neighbors were shocked at our doing so much for ourselves, too, and with our own hands. Our passion for labor worried them. I don't know how often they blushed at seeing me bringing parcels on my bike or on the bus. English gentlemen never carried things, they finally blurted out. They never pushed them, either, I discovered. For I scandalized our village by wheeling our baby in the perambulator all through the lanes and to Oxford and beyond. No British father since Hengist and Horsa had ever done such a thing. It was woman's work. Why shouldn't I wheel my own baby? I asked my frank friends who told me it just wasn't done. In England there are two sets of human beings: those who work with their hands and carry things; those who work with their heads and have things brought to them.

The beauty of American history is that we have combined the two sets. Our Yankee sea captains helped build their own ships with hammers and adzes, and helped sail them by using their hands on lines and gear. The wives who sailed with them could be the fine ships' ladies and yet do a good day's housework, too. It is a new woman in civilization who can write in a ship's diary: *Done a big washing and ironing and mended John's pants and went on board of Capt. Thurlow this evening and took tea.* As pioneers, we had to be carpenters and plowers, even when we were law-makers and teachers. We have never got over these basic occupations. Our women sew and wash dishes and children, and then go out and hold their own in cultured conversation. They have always done so. Our men, no matter what estates they have achieved, have never got over Thomas Jefferson's love of making gadgets and doing a little carpentering here and a little plumbing there, for themselves, in between business conferences or state papers.

We are a nation in shirt-sleeves. We like to put our hands in dirt and get it on our trousers, as our ancestors did. We take our coats off and sail into the weeds in the garden, and we lose no caste in the eyes of our neighbor. He is up to the eyes in the "innerds" of his Ford and couldn't see us if he tried.

Oh yes, our English friends took us to task for Americans' taking their coats off in public and going in shirt and trousers. I had the right come-back for that. Our shirts are finished as decorous outside garments, unlike the frankly night-shirt-like British. Our trousers are outside ones, too. They are not ones that come up to the shoulder blades in unsightly bedroom style. If I wore British pants, I would die before I took my coat off in public!

We Americans are too apt to take chances in matrimony also, we discovered from our English friends. We plunge into matrimony without any adequate preparations, in the way of career or income. We marry young. We marry at first sight, or second. We make mistakes. Again I plead guilty. Our divorce rate is shocking. We marry right out of college often. And even in. We marry

on a shoestring. But it is something of a comfort to point out to the world that we Americans, who are so often dubbed crass materialists by the Europeans, have never had the dowry system of Europe or the long-deferred engagements of the English people, who wish to be sure of the economic basis of marriage before they rush into it. We have always divorced marriage from money. We have let affection, and even passion, take the place of a settlement of money on a wife as the proper foundation for raising a family. We fall in love, rather than fall into a fortune, when we do our leaping. Of course, we make mistakes. But we show more courage and idealism, on the whole, I think, in our daring to rush, young and empty-handed, into the greatest adventure of them all.

And Americans travel too much. Our English villagers were pretty unanimous on that point. Not one of the 463 English adults in our village had ever been to Stratford-on-Avon, forty-two miles to the north. Of course, when one considers what the commercialization of culture has done for Shakespeare's home town, one can sympathize a little with the English. But the villagers had not been to other places much either. They stayed at home pretty much all the time. They had never seen their own cathedrals, or Devon, or Wordsworth's lakes.

Somehow or other, in pleading guilty to this charge of loving to be on the go, I think Americans are to be praised for their desire to broaden themselves by seeing the old cradles in Europe from which their fathers sprang. Of course, there is a lot of lost motion with us. We travel too much for travel's sake. We make too much of mere sightseeing. Yet hungry-eyed schoolmarms drinking in castles and churches have somehow drunk in a lot of glory and strength that have borne fine fruit in high school courses and made better citizens of lots of young Americans. We have always believed in travel as an educator, just as we have believed in education by lectures. The English have mistrusted both. But naïve as we may seem to them to be, I think we have learned a good deal and grown a good deal towards world citizenship by going over the battlefield of Gettysburg, the Alps, seeing the Grand Canyon and Winchester Cathedral. Odysseus learned a lot that made him a better citizen from travel. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson did, too.

3

Yes, and we make too much of saying *hello* to everybody and being friendly at the least chance. Our English neighbors were sure of that. We depend too much on a surface neighborliness.

Maybe we do. Especially in the states west of the Appalachians. But from having lived in the Hoosier State, I should say that friendliness—even casual surface friendliness—is a good thing to make too much of. Again it is a pioneer failing, if it is a failing. It is a poetic thing, this going out of ourselves to meet strangers more than halfway. It is the best way to find poems, I have discovered. For, chances are, if you go out of your shell halfway, the stranger will come out of his, sparkling over with poetry. It seems to me that this

poetry of human sympathy is a pretty fair foundation for the democracy in the world at large we want to build tomorrow.

And, lastly, we Americans, according to our English neighbors, are forever wanting to change our *status quo*, wanting to get somewhere else from where we are, wanting to become something else. Fishermen's sons want to become mechanics, professors' sons want to become fishermen. Farmers' sons yearn to become railroad men. We are a restless and tiring people. We love change.

We do love change. We are restless. But it seems to me to be a kind of noble restlessness that eats us, and we do want to better ourselves, usually, want to go up in the world, make something more of ourselves, mentally as well as financially, than our fathers left us. Almost every American city is a monument to America's divine discontent. Our cities change shape faster than any other cities on earth. And usually they do not grow merely in the direction of material improvement. Our tall ugly buildings become the taller lovelier ones of New York's skyline today. Our architecture, our art, our literature, our music, are constantly on the make, as well as our railroads and automobiles. Improvement on one plane very often induces improvement on others.

Every son must rise above his father. That is the New World physics to which we heartily subscribe. It isn't the physics of the Old World. *No river ever rises higher than its source.* That is the physics Europe believed in for two thousand years. But some Europeans would not subscribe to that physics. So they packed up and came over the sea. They wanted a new physics. For that reason men of totally different bloods and religions and political theories came into this wilderness that was America and tried the experiment of mingling bloods and brains. To escape that physics of their ancestors, Englishmen, Scotsmen, Irish, Dutch, French, and Germans bled themselves white, worked their fingers to the bone, fought Philistines more terrible than insect-men from another planet, hungered, thirsted, starved. They believed in the new physics of a man's improving on the politics and culture and noses and foreheads of his fathers. For this they lived in log huts, plowed among stones and roots, drained marshes, overturned mountains, knew vast loneliness for years and lives on end, endured polar cold, wore out their shoes, put on deer-skin, felled forests, built churches and courthouses and state capitols and hospitals and colleges by the thousands to Europe's hundreds. For this they dared the dangerous experiment of giving schooling to all, of making rail-splitters and farmers the leaders of the people, of making fast, fine vehicles the property of every family. For this they moved mountains and sweat blood.

It was not enough for us to believe in common man. We have believed in him from the beginning of our history. The "century of the common man" has been about three centuries long so far. It was an extra belief that kept us going through Indian wars and Civil War—the belief that the common man can become an uncommon man. We have already produced a lot of him. Jefferson, born to silks and daring to make farmers and day-laborers into the cornerstones of the state, was one. So was the man who dared give the black people equality with the white. So were the ministers of the gospel and bankers who dared put college education into the poorest man's reach. So

were the millionaires who dared spread free libraries and museums over the country. So were the benefactors who built great foundations in medicine and scientific research. We are a nation built squarely on the risk of improving ourselves to the limit of the blue sky.

I am mighty glad my neighbors in France and England, through their criticism of our outside appearance, called my attention to the possibilities we Americans have as potential leading citizens in the world democracy to come. Great love for children, eagerness to learn by travel, daring in social experiments, friendliness, and a profound passion for improving ourselves ought to stand us in good stead in the new turn history will take after this war.

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LITERATURE AND SCIENCE: A STUDY IN CONFLICT

THE CONFLICT between literature and science, like the much more ancient one between science and religion, is still going on. Men of letters face the choice of becoming "slaves" of science (the strategy of submission) or remaining intransigent and independent (the strategy of revolt). The logic of events, the pressure of tradition, and a complex of professional motives have forced them to accept the gage of battle. Since they cannot resign themselves to the sovereignty of science, they must perforce revolt.

But what are they to revolt against? There is the rub. There is little agreement among literary men as to what they most object to in the scientific discipline. The warfare between literature and science turns into a war of scattered forces attacking irregularly on a wide, confused front. If the writers were clear in their mind as to what they were fighting *against* (they know what they are fighting *for*), there might be some hope of reconciliation or of waging war to a decisive issue. As it is we are left in a befuddled state.

What are some of the explicitly voiced objections against science? First of all, the scientific method is condemned on the ground that it is analytical

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and empirical; it is therefore fragmentary, not organic and universal. Second, it is concerned primarily with the realm of facts, not of values; it gathers data, it does not interpret and evaluate them. Third, instrumentalism may be a good laboratory technique; it is not a way of life. Fourth, literature differs in kind from science; it has its own laws and techniques; as an autonomous field of expression it is not susceptible of scientific analysis. Finally, the philosophy of science is squarely opposed to that of literary humanism.

The fatal weakness of those who attack scientists for their narrow vision and mistaken assumptions is that they themselves take a number of things for granted which are altogether dubious. By appealing directly to the innermost intuitions of the reader, they set up an untenable dichotomy between reason and intuition, head and heart. A refined sensibility, we are given to understand, is capable of a more profound apprehension of reality than the mind of the physicist—as if the scientist possessed no intuitions at all. Another and no less fatal error they commit is to assume a transcendental order of existence to which they, by virtue of their refined sensibility and clairvoyant intuitions, have special access. Fortified with such specious arguments, they call for a liquidation of our extraverted, mechanical, materialistic life and a return to the true inner self, a regeneration of the soul, a lifting of the individual from the naturalistic to the spiritual and creative level of the absolute.

All this sounds highly inspiring if one were only able to grasp concretely what is meant by these abstractions. The prestige of literature is at stake, and the litterateurs will not surrender without a desperate struggle. Why should “knowledge” be reserved for the scientific discipline, while literature—well, what does it do? It expresses emotions, it organizes attitudes, it communicates the wholeness and unique particularity of an experience, but it is not concerned with either knowledge or truth. It does not deal with ideas or their logical relationship or their empirical validity. Therefore, the defenders of literature hasten to demonstrate that literature utilizes a different linguistic function from that common to science, and that artistic truth is somehow superior to the truths of science.

Why so many writers and critics should feel a constitutional antipathy towards science is one of the mysteries psychology must explore, but this antipathy is at the root of the conflict that is still raging today. In the weather-beaten perspective of time, the result of this ideological struggle may prove as important in its effect on the course of civilization as the outcome of World War II. The litterateur, defending his professional interests, has become a forceful propagandist in a movement designed to undermine the validity of science. Even if the scientist wished to do so, he is not in a position to counteract this noisy stream of propaganda. His aim is to humanize and universalize the philosophy of science, to recommend the virtue of suspended judgment based on observation and critical reflection. He would extend the use of the method of empirical rationalism not only to specialized fields of investigation but also to the realm of politics, economics, ethics, social behavior.

It is indeed strange to find men of letters fulminating against science as if it were a fatally destructive Juggernaut, a Frankenstein. Both in England and

the United States, the intellectuals give vent to hysterical squeaks of indignation at the rapid spread of scientific ideas. Some powerful emotional leaven must be at work to call forth this violent attitude of opposition, too irrational in substance to be explained on purely logical grounds. There is the shrill outcry that science spells the death of individuality. Impersonal, quantitative, precise, it would standardize not only commodities and methods of production but also men. It would reduce the world, "so various, so beautiful, so new," to a single, mechanical unit, whereas literature is based essentially on the qualitative principle. The creative life is concerned with values, tradition, ideals—elements which are alien and antipathetic to the scientific outlook.

Science, it is true, endeavors to arrive at objectivity in its observations and conclusions, thus tending as far as possible to eliminate the subjective, the bias of temperament, the fallibility that is human—all-too-human. Even if we grant this much, it is still difficult to understand why the writers are so envenomed in their protests. The argument directed against the mechanical aspects of science is a disingenuous rationalization. Something more fundamental is at stake: two world-attitudes are in conflict. If the truths of science prevail, and they are making irresistible headway on all fronts, then the pretensions of literature to a higher, unassailable, eternal truth must be abandoned. Some critics have stressed the idea that literature is the product of a mysterious, mystical intuition. Others have maintained that it is a criticism of life, concerned with moral values and with the projection of beauty otherwise unapprehended and unexpressed. It voices the universal through the medium of the particular; it affirms and gives imaginative life to the enduring faith by which men live. But if science strips off the veil of divinity from the ark of creation, if the sublime and universal truth of literature is shown to be neither sublime in origin nor objectively valid, if beauty and intuition are disintegrated by the ultraviolet rays of scientific analysis, then what is left for the writer? Literature becomes no more than a source of refreshment, a form of play, the sublimation of superfluous or frustrated energies. It can provide enjoyment and even illumination but not certitude.

Thus at the heart of this embattled controversy a fierce professional rivalry manifests itself. A rivalry perhaps unconscious in nature, but the writers who pitch angrily into science are, whether or not they realize it, defending their vested interests as purveyors of a "higher" truth. That is why they are in such a stew of revolt. In their wrathful desperation they seize upon any missile that lies ready to hand and fling it at the Mephistophelian head of Science, the dark angel destroying the religious sense and casting men adrift on a shoreless sea of doubt. The gods are unseated, and there is nothing to take their place. Man finds himself rootless, depersonalized, anarchic, in a universe of meaningless flux. Arbitrary and limited in outlook, science is considered guilty of a gross and inescapable narrowing of the field of vision. Inescapable because by definition it confines itself to conclusions only about those processes and events which can be known and verified. What do these objections amount

to? Nothing more than this: Science is not religion, science is not mysticism, science is not prophecy, science is not art. But who ever said it was?

If literary men persist in their uncritical assaults on science, naïvely distorting the scientific outlook, if they continue to concern themselves with intuitions of a "higher" truth, then the value of their work is bound to suffer. Science is no longer something external and abstract; it is an intimate part of the world we live in, already an integral part of ourselves, our perceptions, our thoughts, our cultural heritage, and to ignore it is a bit of inexcusable folly.

The attitude of the humanist scholar towards science is psychologically revealing. Three ways are open to him: first, he may reject the scientific discipline, exposing its limitations and contradictions; second, he may surrender his special privileges and accept the discoveries and doctrines of science; third, he may attempt a compromise whereby science is allotted its restricted sphere of influence while literature retains its own. The first method has been tried and resulted in conspicuous failure. The second solution of the problem was for a time highly popular. Since science had come to stay, was there any good reason why literary scholarship should not become "scientific"? Humanistic scholars would beat the scientists at their own game. Thus there was instituted the fetish of research, the religion of the authenticated literary fact, the mania of resurrecting forgotten texts and manuscripts. In the intoxication of engaging at last in "scientific" research, the work of interpretation and critical appraisal was forgotten.

But the scholars could not long fool themselves with the talisman of scientific research. This was getting them nowhere. What were they doing but turning out a race of glorified pedants, dry-as-dust scholars without taste, understanding, or critical appreciation? The method was supposed to be scientific, but the results were neither literature nor scholarship nor science. There was no high purpose, no unifying principle, behind these labors. Scholars had gone astray because they had, so they professed to believe, capitulated to the scientific discipline. It was, on the contrary, their lamentable misconception of the function of science, their crude failure to understand the nature and limitations of the scientific method, which had trapped them in this cul-de-sac.

If both methods had failed to work, the third was still available: a form of compromise. To each would be assigned a kingdom which it could govern: to science what belonged to science, to literature what was distinctively the province of letters. Thus the troubled waters were to be stilled. Unfortunately the truce was soon broken, for the simple reason that the literary scholars entertained a peculiar conception of the demesne they had been assigned to rule as their own. Science was arbitrarily cut off from the sphere of value, which then became a function exclusively reserved for the humanities. "Surely," Professor Norman Foerster declares in *Literary Scholarship*, "it is time for scholars in the humanities to make clear to themselves the fact that science is not the only respectable kind of inquiry." Now what can one mean by a "respectable" kind of inquiry? Even if we grant that literary scholarship must forge its own methods, why this emphatic repudiation of science? Why make

the gratuitous assumption that values, which are the special concern of the humanities, lie outside the jurisdiction of science? Though more temperate in tone, Professor Foerster's attack is substantially like the one Irving Babbitt delivered in 1908 when he published his *Literature and the American Scholar*.

Only one conclusion is possible: men of letters, whatever the plausibility of the rational arguments they advance, are opposed to science because it destroys the picture of the universe in which they wish to believe. If the statements of science are true, then the as-if fictions of poetry must be discarded as sheer fantasy or make-believe. Yet there is no reason why the discoveries of science, once they are taken into the mental climate of the race, cannot, as William Wordsworth believed, become the nutriment on which poetry can feed. The advance of science does not sign the death-warrant of poetry. Whether or not he accepts the scientific outlook, the poet cannot sweat it out of his system. Whether he likes it or not, he inherits the culture of his age, and the culture of our time is predominantly scientific. There is not a major poet writing today whose work does not in some measure reveal the revolutionary impact of science on his thinking, his interpretation of the world, his philosophy of values. The enforced isolation of science from traditional literary culture is an unsatisfactory state of affairs. A culture that deliberately divorces itself from the dominating ideas of its time dooms itself to pedantic futility.

The real issue at stake, then, is whether literary truth can be put into a separate category, entirely distinct from scientific truth. If literature presumes to communicate "truth," then this truth, no matter how derived or expressed, must compete on the same terms and in the same open market with scientific truths. There can be no exemptions, no dialectical distinctions. Either literature voices truth or it does not. If it does, then it must be prepared to meet the challenge of science.

In *The Nature of Literature*, another of the numerous attempts to explain literature in its relation to science, language, and human experience, Professor Thomas Clark Pollock contends that the function of science is to communicate referential meaning, while that of literature is to express and communicate the wholeness of experience, experience in all its immediacy and complexity, its aliveness and unabstractable realness. Once he accepts these limiting conditions, the scientist is neatly trapped. For "reality" cannot be defined or exhausted in referential terms. We get abstractions and generalizations, not the actual reality of human experience. Literature is presumably unique because it communicates the quality of experience, not abstractions from these experiences. In short, literary expression is alleged to be closer to the stuff of life, furnishing a more vital approximation to reality, than the abstractions of science. This theory leaves out the fact that the experience which it is the function of literature to communicate is also an abstraction. There is no correspondence, except a purely symbolic one, between experience and expression. A lyric kiss is but the fugitive shadow of a kiss.

This brings up the problem of truth in poetry, for poetic truth is a special instance of literary truth. Must emotions be forced into the channels of the

reasonable and the valid, or can they lead a charmed life of their own, needing no excuse for being? There have been critics like Coleridge and I. A. Richards who argue that poetic beliefs have no connection at all with factual propositions. In *Communications*, Karl Britton concludes that:

. . . imaginative writing has its quite distinctive "truth" and "falsity," its "reasonings" of the heart that Reason does not know; its "meaning." But for these different features of imaginative writing, the terminology of science and history is inappropriate and positively misleading. For the "truth" that is peculiar to poetry—its validity—is simply its value for men: this can be assessed, and statements about the value of poetry are themselves either true or false in the straightforward sense of these words. And the "reasons" of poetry are those emotional connections which are fundamental to poetry; they are not founded upon any relations of implication.

There is a flaw in this defence of poetry. If the "truths" peculiar to poetry are simply their value for men, apart from the rational-empirical truths of science, then the implication holds that poetry can entertain any truths at all so long as these are pleasing to the emotional needs of readers. Poetry therefore becomes a sublimation, a therapeutic, a land of make-believe, a blissful dream-world, a realm of delightful fictions. Such a defense draws a sharp line of cleavage between the truths of poetry and those of science. Actually no such cleavage exists. In their efforts to reach to the heart of Nature, many poets have turned eagerly to the scientific dispensation. When the poets of the Romantic school, led by Wordsworth, insisted that writers should keep their eye on the object and report truly what they beheld, they achieved a creative triumph of the scientific method. Wordsworth might ridicule the botanist who peeps and botanizes on his mother's grave, but he himself used his observation of plants and birds and natural scenery to excellent effect.

Exactly what science could do for poetry is a question that, until recently, had never been seriously asked. The problem, however, had not been correctly grasped. The question is not what science can do for the poet. For that matter, what can Nature do for the poet? It is not Nature, as Coleridge sadly realized, but the interpretation of Nature that counts supremely: what the poets themselves as creative agents help to contribute. Similarly with science. If it has not exerted a fructifying influence on poetry, is the fault to be imputed to science or to the ignorance of poets, their adherence to convention, their subservience to tradition? Science has broken no promises for the simple reason that she has never made any. Science, like Nature, is there for the taking; those who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear as well as a generous share of imagination and talent, can fuse this rich diversity of new material into a brilliant creative synthesis. There is no warrant for the arbitrary dualism which sets science apart from literature, or which brings them into opposition.

The poet cannot turn to science in the expectation that it will solve his problems for him, but he cannot solve them himself without its aid. It can furnish him with a foundation of related and reliable knowledge, but it cannot supply him with talent and an integrated philosophy of life. It can point out the way of reaching truth, but he must walk the whole way himself. Science can teach

him all that it has so far discovered concerning heredity, the influence of the cultural environment, the structure of the human personality, the psychology of instincts and emotions and thought, but it cannot make him feel this knowledge in his blood, assimilate it organically within his being. Ideas can be stated; they cannot be communicated. Hence if the poet is foolish enough to turn to science in the belief that it will give him a ready-made esthetic philosophy, a definitive answer to all questions, a basis for the complete understanding of all problems, he is bound to be disappointed.

And there are a million and one things that a thorough knowledge of science will not do for the poet. Just as wide and varied experience and deep feeling will not necessarily make a poet, so training in the meaning and implications of the scientific method will not add one iota to the poet's talent or facilitate his mastery of form and technique. Skill in the handling of language, imaginative richness of texture, the evocation of mood, the wedding of sound and sense, the strong undercurrent of rhythm, these come as the result of training and practice and are not conditioned by the nature of the material at the poet's disposal. The linguistic medium is different in structure and aim from that of science.

But there is no escaping the impasse created by the allied problems of literary value and truth. If literature, as is confidently asserted, is the locus of value and gives expression to truth, these cannot, except in form, be distinctive and unique. The pluralistic assumption that there are all kinds of truth, with its corollary that literature yields a form of truth not only different from, but vastly superior to, the empirical truths of science, that is the assumption which has caused so much damage and confusion. The proposition is either true or false. Our contention is that it is totally false.

Poetry cannot presume to possess a validity that is superior to, or in conflict with, the findings of science, but there is no reason in the world why the poet, like the philosopher, who has mastered the scientific culture of his age should not know anything about life. In his iconoclastic book, *The Literary Mind*, Max Eastman had underlined this very point: that poets, as poets, do not know anything about life. Why should they "know" any less than Eastman, who is himself a poet? Is the mind of a Robinson Jeffers or Archibald MacLeish or W. H. Auden (to name but three significant contemporary poets at random) less richly endowed, less perceptive and understanding, than the mind of a psychologist or biologist? Poetry does not merely suggest the immediate quality of experience; it also passes judgment on that experience even if only by an emotional conclusion that it is good or bad.

No, science does not advance by driving poetry out. The advance of science simply imposes a greater intellectual responsibility on the poet. If poetry cannot in time assimilate the conclusions of science, it is doomed. True, it cannot feed on electrons and protons, on conditioned reflexes and the theory of relativity. Science universalizes the relations of things; literature clings to the individual experience. Exactly! Therefore there is no conflict between science and poetry. If the latter represents the world as man discovers it, the representation must correspond in some measure to the comprehensive picture of

reality furnished by science. For science too reports the world as man finds it.

Though poetry and science have different aims, they have much in common. Not that poetry, steeped in scientific lore, will degenerate into guides to conduct or that poets will fashion their work according to the latest bulletin from the laboratory or clinic. Spontaneity will have to remain, freedom of choice, genuine individuality of expression. Though the literary mind is heavily handicapped in an age of science, this handicap is its greatest promise of future achievement. In his *A Hope for Poetry*, C. Day Lewis declares that modern poets "are making strenuous attempts to tap the power of science by absorbing scientific data into their own work: by 'scientific data' I mean the myriad new sense-data which scientific development has put before us." For before scientific data can be rendered accessible to the poet, it must percolate through the general consciousness, become an integral part of the social environment.

From the time of Aristotle down, the critics have been laboring hard to make it out that literature, particularly poetry, was by some divinity of circumstance, some infusion of genius and inspiration, truer than history or science, a superior kind of revelation. Our object has been not so much to separate the two disciplines—literature and science—as to bring them fruitfully together. Each can profit from the other. Science can make the writer more scrupulous, more critical, more objective, less inclined to mistake the will-o'-the-wisps of the imagination for the truth of reality. It can bring him closer to the world of sense, enable him to realize the complexity of the universe, render him more humble and earnest in his search. In turn he must be willing to submit his conclusions to the empirical test, not to believe that his truths somehow partake of transcendental essences, that he portrays a "higher Reality." He must accept the responsibility imposed on one who ventures to make the truth of life known.

Once a writer accepts the scientific outlook, his isolation would end. Poets reared in the scientific discipline would discover that no disastrous consequences followed, that their will was still "free," that they still had an infinite variety of experiences to write about. It is not the function of the poet to interpret the conclusions of science in verse; he is not a popularizer of chemistry, physics, biology, and anthropology. What he draws on as relevant to his art and fruitful in its influence is the philosophy of science, the scientific synthesis. His task is to humanize science as it applies to the varied problems that man must face, the fate he must undergo on earth. He does not paraphrase the theory of relativity; he shows it in action in his poetic universe. He does not preach doctrines; he incarnates attitudes, beliefs, and these are strongly colored by the scientific outlook. Those poets who accept the philosophy of scientific humanism will abandon their futile war against science, convinced that science offers them a real and spacious world for the exercise of their talents and a rich soil for the use of their imagination and insight.

Literature can be restored to its high estate only on the condition that it renounce both the folly of laying claim to possessing a special and superior brand of truth and the even greater folly of denying that it has any concern at all with either knowledge or truth. Both philosophies are mistaken and self-

defeating. For the sake of their own salvation, writers must reaffirm the vital and redeeming principle that literature, rooted in reality and born of experience, is essentially a criticism of life, and that this criticism will prove most efficacious when it works in alliance with the scientific outlook. Literature has everything to gain and nothing to lose from such an alliance.

5. *Judgments*

HELEN E. HAINES *was born in New York City and privately educated there. As author and librarian she has seldom been out of books during the course of a long and fruitful life. For many years a lecturer and instructor in library work, she was Managing Editor of The Library Journal from 1895 to 1908. A Visiting Professor of Library Science at the University of Southern California since 1937, Miss Haines received an honorary degree from that institution in 1945. Her books include The Art of Book Selection and What's in a Novel. She now lives in Pasadena, where she has done outstanding book reviews for the Star-News since 1922.*

REVIEWING A NOVEL

"She's a very conscientious person," said Miss Lydgate, "but she has an unfortunate knack of making any subject sound dull."

—DOROTHY SAYERS: *Gaudy Night*

TO KNOW what's in a novel, to appreciate the values it offers, does not mean that it is easy to formulate that knowledge and pass it on to others, in clear, effective, and interesting fashion. This endeavor, however, has become one of the popular activities of the day; it enlists a multitude of exponents—professionals, amateurs, novices, and veterans—and it has given a new connotation to the familiar term "book reviewing." Radio has been the great factor in extending a field of book reviewing that is independent of the medium of print. The spoken review supplements the older, impersonal, relationship of reviewer and reader with the more personal relationship of reviewer and listener. The reviewer on the air brings to his audience commentary on recent books and also acts as "personal conductor" for authors

"Reviewing a Novel," reprinted from Haines, *What's in a Novel*, by permission of Columbia University Press.

in interviews or discussion of their work. Book review programs are a specialty of many lecturers for clubs and for subscription groups; they are offered by libraries, in radio talks or in free lectures; they are sponsored by bookshops and department stores, educational and commercial organizations; and they are a staple product of the women's clubs, large and small, whose interests are interwoven in American life.

Indeed, club women today form probably the largest body of book reviewers in the country. In women's clubs from Maine to Hawaii, from Florida to Alaska, books find place on programs throughout the club year. Many such programs are presented by professional reviewers, who have developed a skillful technique of entertainment that calls for little individual response from their audiences; and there is a growing inclination to prefer this, if possible, because it imposes no direct personal responsibility, requires no individual mental concentration, and supplies "literary" comment and opinion available as current coin of conversation. But the reviewing that prevails most generally in smaller clubs is done or participated in by club members themselves. It is essentially amateur reviewing: expression of individual taste, individual judgment, by women who read because they enjoy books, who have intelligence and common sense, who sincerely wish to know and appreciate the best books of the day, but who do not have the background of general book acquaintance, the facility in organization and presentation, that are prime requirements of good professional reviewing. Anyone who has a fairly wide acquaintance with the reviewing done by club members for their own programs must have realized how much time and thought are given in this endeavor to convey to others the nature of a book assigned for review. There are many good reviews, conveying character and quality of a book with responsiveness and insight (attributes of good reviewing that should go hand in hand); but there are many more that are defective or weak in structure or in presentation. The reviewer's conscientious effort may be evident, but she is unable to make the content and personality of the book either significant or interesting to her audience.

It is for amateurs and for beginners in the widening field of oral book reviewing that these suggestions are made.¹ The writing of reviews for publication is not dealt with; it has much in common with the spoken book review, but the latter has its own distinctive requirements, which have been less widely formulated. In general the points here considered are applicable to reviews of books in any field, but specifically they apply to novels; for current fiction is the most difficult, the most debatable, and usually the most inadequately handled material on the ordinary book review program. This is partly the effect of that certain condescension toward the novel that prevails in the American educational and intellectual world and is reflected in an apologetic attitude on the part of readers somewhat self-consciously in quest of culture; and it is partly because discriminating judgment of fiction requires appreciation of literary art rather than certitude regarding moral standards.

¹ Fuller consideration of book reviewing, in principle and practice, may be found in Helen E. Haines, *Living with Books*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1935, chaps. vi-viii.

Two principles dominate virtually all book reviewing. One is the principle set forth by Anatole France, when he defined criticism as "the adventures of the soul among the masterpieces of literature." This is essentially the principle of the literary and critical essay, not of the book review. It interprets in terms of intellectual or emotional analysis; it may convey a work in part rather than as a whole; and it follows no conventionalized form of organization or treatment. The second principle represents an impersonal (or as impersonal as possible) consideration of an author's work. This is essentially the principle of the book review, as a logically organized summary and appraisal of a book as a whole. And in the field of book reviewing Anatole France has been responsible for sad havoc. The adventures of a reviewer's soul may be edifying, illuminating, entertaining. When they record the conclusions of an expert critic, a literary artist, they invigorate and enrich the study of literature; but in their more ordinary manifestation they give us, in sum, a review of a reviewer in his personal relation to a given book rather than a review of the book itself. Impersonal consideration of an author's work, on the other hand, is founded on the familiar dictum: a review should tell what the author set out to do, what he did, and how he did it. This remains, I think, the basic principle of good reviewing.

Both principles are represented in many variations, singly or together, in reviews of different degrees of excellence. The soul-adventuring reviewer is apt to convey enthusiasm with more ardor than discrimination, to center appreciation—or, conversely, to focus disapproval—so strongly on some special interpretation of theme that the proportions of the book as a whole are obscured; while the reviewer who seeks objectivity may be led into flippant commentary, cursory characterization, that cheapens or ignores the real values of a book. The best reviewing will draw something from both principles. It will be based on the dictum already noted; it will be impersonal in the sense that it will avoid egotism, but it will convey the reviewer's own personal response to the book, his perceptiveness of literary art, his intellectual point of view. Each individual book will be approached with an open mind and judged according to its own merits.

This leads to the question, "What is an open mind?" Well, an open mind is not a vacuum; it is not a mortar into which a book's contents are poured and pounded with the pestle of prejudice or of conviction; it is not a funnel through which all that enters passes, leaving no sediment. Rather, it is a strainer, with a flexible, yet strong, mesh of reason and understanding. An open mind should be open both to the past and the present, with a periscopic aperture directed toward the future. There are many reviewers whose appreciation of literature stopped with 1910. There are many more on whose mental horizon no literature more than ten years old has ever loomed. Thoroughgoing traditionalism will deaden any review. So also, entire immediacy will impair judgment, for it has no perspective and no consciousness of what is derivative.

To judge a book according to its merits requires, first of all, a sense of values and a background of acquaintance with literature. It is difficult to have one

without the other, for realization of values requires appreciation of literary art, and there must be some acquaintance with any art—even if only “a smattering of ignorance”—before it can be appreciated. In other words, a good book review should have proportion and authority. Proportion means balance in analysis and characterization and also in judgment expressed. The review that is essentially an expression of personal friendship, that hails some novel as a masterpiece because the author is a fellow townsman or a friend or a protégé of the reviewer, is one of the familiar examples of reviewing that lacks a true sense of values. On the other hand, the review that is a vehicle of attack because the book it deals with offends the reviewer in subject or point of view is thrown out of proportion by this undue emphasis. As a rule, violence in reviewing is likely to defeat itself, whether it be violence in panegyric or in condemnation; it raises expectations that are not fulfilled when the book is read, and induces in its hearers a cynical disbelief that anything is really what it is said to be. But this does not mean that enthusiasm should be lacking or that critical judgment should be unexpressed. Prejudices, of course, exist in every one of us. A reviewer without personal likes and dislikes would be spineless and mindless and not worth listening to. There must always be enthusiasm, and enthusiasm for something always means distaste for something else. The reviewer who is entirely noncommittal and aloof has no real fiber of thought or appreciation; but the reviewer who condemns or ridicules a book simply because he doesn't like the author or is opposed to the theme or the treatment is equally at fault. Competent reviewing is what its name implies: a looking over the whole body of a book to convey its nature. The good reviewer does not indulge in unreasoning destruction or infatuated adulation, but analyzes and appraises with the purpose of rendering fair judgment on a piece of literature that, whether he likes it or not, is to be considered for what it is. In any such judgment there is necessarily a critical element—valid indication of merits or demerits, of excellence or crudity in expression, of triviality or significance, of values obvious or implied. A colorless statement of a novel's content is the easiest and most negligible form of reviewing.

It is true that there is often strong temptation to review a book in a wholly satirical or condemnatory vein. Also, such a review may have entertainment value for its audience. To justify it, however, qualities of humor, of deft phrasing, and of essentially sound critical perception are needed that few amateur reviewers possess. Christopher Morley's memorable review of Charles Morgan's *Sparkenbroke*² is a masterpiece of brilliant satirical writing turned to parody, but it is also good critical appraisal, without shallowness or show-off. Among expert professional reviewers the “devastating” attack upon a book or writer is still wielded as a critical weapon, though much less frequently nowadays than in the past. Carl Van Doren, in his *Three Worlds*, remarks that “the only reviews which ever give instant delight are the ferocious or feline ones,” and adds: “It is not quite like watching a fight. Rather, it is like watching a public execution, and it seems to fascinate.” His inference that there is an ele-

² *Saturday Review of Literature*, XII (No. 25, April 18, 1936), 13-16.

ment of sadism or latent envy in this attitude seems true enough. There is, at any rate, an instinctive tendency to disparage the novel that everyone is praising; not on a basis of reason or understanding, but in the mood of reaction that exiled Aristides because people were tired of hearing him called the Just. The spoken book-review program that exalts this tendency is as deadening to any true appreciation of literature as is the program that indulges in the opposite extreme, of indiscriminate rhapsody. Indeed, the two infections to which the immature or inexperienced reviewer is particularly susceptible are contemptuosmosis, or infiltration of the flow of enthusiasm by a septic element, and superlativitis, or adjectival inflammation of the nerves of appreciation. Both are pernicious; both need preventive watchfulness.

If proportion is based on fair comparative relations between material and judgment, authority is rooted in background knowledge of literature. It makes possible an almost instinctive comparison of books that have proved their qualities with those newborn and untested and is thus one of the greatest aids to discriminating judgment. Establishing the existence and the differentiation of literary values, it is a means for orientation amid confusion and diversity. Authority builds itself from wide reading, from experience, from study; but, however gained, it is one of the qualifications of the expert reviewer. It is strange how many intelligent people, whose interest in reading is quite genuine and whose confidence in their own judgment is rarely shaken, remain completely insensitive to the quality of a book as literature; for them the subject and the "moral tone" are the only things that count; nor do they seem able to consider a book in relation to its author—to his style, his characteristics, and his other work.

Good reviewing cannot be done by everyone. Ability can be elicited and stimulated, but it cannot be instilled, if specific taste and instinctive fitness are absent. Even when the genuine personal response exists, there are certain requirements essential to discriminating and effective reviewing. One of the first of these is interest on the part of the reviewer; a languid or indifferent approach or a grim determination to carry through a formidable task will stultify the more subtle qualities of any novel. There should be power to concentrate, a responsive mind, sensitivity to literary expression—the richer the background of varied reading, the better—and a natural facility in expression, in the choice of words and phrasing. Spontaneous critical or analytical interest is desirable; so are a sense of beauty, some grains of imagination, a generous measure of enthusiasm, also skepticism to temper fervor. Balanced judgment, the ability to compare and contrast, is necessary. Special interest and individual taste are always to be considered: in the review of a book that has been deeply enjoyed there are likely to be special values of sympathy or interpretation; and, concurrently, no reviewer should review the kind of book that he personally dislikes, unless he can be truly impersonal—honest, but fair. An overpersonal attitude is usually strongly tinged with egocentricity. There are many readers who precipitate themselves upon specific aspects of a novel—phases of character development, equivocal situations, climactic actions—which they seize and hold up as generalizations, true or false, according to whether what

the novelist has depicted coincides with their own individual experience. In a way, they are paying unconscious tribute to fiction's power of communicating the actual experience of living; but they are demanding that what is communicated should not be the novelist's interpretation of human existence as he has known it, studied it, and given it form within a certain structure of expression, but a duplication of the reader's own ideas, a reaffirmation of his pre-established codes, that will diffuse a further ambience of self-satisfaction.

The first step in preparation of a review is to read the book. Professional reviewers are able to do this with great rapidity; they skim, yet manage to absorb the substance. The amateur needs and should take more time. How much will depend upon the length and the character of the book. Such a novel as *The Star-Gazer*, Harsanyi's erudite, close-packed study of Galileo's life, is much slower of assimilation than is a novel in quick tempo of everyday experience, like Morley's *Kitty Foyle*. The work of novelists like Thomas Mann, Jules Romains, and Martin Du Gard is world literature and will demand and repay all the time, thought, and study that can be given to it; but there are many current novels that in social or critical or literary significance deserve more careful reading than they usually receive. Read the book with interest; if possible, with sympathy. No book can be reviewed fairly if read simply as a task. Read with pencil at hand and make brief notes (if only page references jotted on a bookmark) that will later give clue to specific facts or some sentence significant for quotation or will help to indicate distinctive characteristics. Watch for and note "human interest" material—episodes, delineations, commentary that in homely truth or charm or wit or graphic touch will appeal to an audience and deepen its interest. But don't attempt to formulate a review while reading the book. Read and enjoy (if you can); then analyze and formulate the impression the book has made. The thoughtful reader generally has a changing sequence of impressions. At first there may be a response of enthusiasm, an apparent happy accord between author and reader. Then reservations rise: here is monotony; here a lapse into sentimentalism; the smooth flow becomes dull going, confusing or overweighted; the first impression closes with the opening mood reversed. Or the reversal may be directly opposite: a first impression that opens with enforced patience, continues with latent boredom, is pricked to quickened apprehension, strengthens to rising appreciation, and closes with enthusiasm. Often the impression may be checkered throughout, leaving no definite commitment to praise or blame; the reader is aware of merits and of shortcomings.

While reading, try to correlate and clarify the impressions as they rise and change. Then, afterwards, consider them in retrospect and from their almost certain conflict draw a more unified conclusion, adjusted to the novel's material, theme, purpose, and mode of expression, rather than to the reader's predilections. While avoiding personal prejudice, don't surrender reasoned personal judgment. Opinion should be independent and honestly indicated. Don't praise, if the only reason for doing so is that others do; but try fairly and sympathetically to estimate the book itself, in its own manifestation. And in doing this, avoid moral indignation. There is no veil drawn today over the recogni-

tion and discussion of social evils. The mature mind is fully aware that abnormality, sordidness, violence, and degradation exist in human life. Much painful or repellent fiction is as vital and significant an expression of the life of our day as are the social and political currents on which we are borne along; and no sound critical judgment of a novel can be made solely from a moralistic viewpoint.

Briefly, to the question "How should I read a novel?" the answer is: Read it for yourself, according to what are apparently diametrically opposed principles, namely: with freedom, with control; with surrender, with criticism; with sympathy, with judgment. Such a reading involves a threefold perceptive process: comprehension (understanding of the novel's structure and treatment); appreciation (response to its appeal as an evocation of human experience); criticism (analytical consideration of its qualities and defects and of your own individual reactions).

Back of the actual process of reading lie the bases of judgment. There must be some general understanding of the nature and art of fiction as creative literature, some specific recognition of the characteristics and qualities of the novel that is being read. In the analysis of any novel salient points concerning scope, substance, and structure must be considered. Perhaps it is well to note briefly what they are.

Theme, subject, plot.—Theme is commonly defined as the subject of a composition, but it may also be considered as the motif or dominant idea that is an undercurrent or overtone of both subject and plot. Subject is the specific phase of human experience with which a novel deals. Plot is the skeleton of the story. Thus, according to such an analysis, in *The Grapes of Wrath* theme (implicit in title) is the portent of revolution rising from economic injustice; subject is the great forced migration from the Southwest to California of farmers ruined by bank foreclosures and soil exhaustion—"tractored off the land"; plot is the experience of the Joad family on their journey from Oklahoma and what happened to them after they reached California. In Aldous Huxley's *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* theme is the need of escape from materialism into the nonpersonality, timelessness, and peace of oriental philosophy; subject is the vulgarity, animalism, fear of death, and greed that make up modern living, spectacularly exemplified in Southern California; plot is the satiric, fantastic narrative of a millionaire's quest for prolongation of life. While virtually all novels are subject novels, not all convey a theme in this sense of a dominating idea implicit in the whole composition. Continental novelists use this element more generally than do American or English novelists; but almost all novels of distinctive quality have a theme-idea underlying their concrete subject. Plot expresses itself in action: sometimes in a sustained movement toward a dramatic climax; sometimes in more desultory sequence of episode and incident. It directs the reader's interest along the line the novelist has traced for his story pattern, and it gives opportunity to clarify and vitalize character portrayal. It should be a means of progression from a beginning through a middle to an end.

Setting and period.—In historical and regional novels time and place are of

special importance; but virtually all novels have some distinctive setting, and in the majority some time relationship is indicated, even if vaguely. Observe the extent of the period covered and the exactitude with which it is denoted. Does it run a long and carefully traced continuous course, as in *The Tree of Liberty* (1754-1806)? Is it revealed in successive chronological vistas, as in the separate panels of Doris Leslie's *Fair Company*? Is it part of a remembered past, as in Llewellyn's *How Green Was My Valley*? Is it a single specific contemporary interval (a year in Josephine Johnson's *Jordanstown*, a day in Kenneth Fearing's *The Hospital*)? Is it obviously but indefinitely in "the past" or "the present," or is it a projection into the future, as in Sherriff's *The Hopkins Manuscript*? Awareness of the time-span, whatever it may be, gives clearer realization of the novel as a whole and often helps in testing the validity of incidental material. Setting is an important factor, closely related to subject and form and treatment. Consider whether it is made an indispensable and living background, integrated in the nature and development of the novel, as in Rölvaag's *Giants in the Earth* or Rawlings's *The Yearling*; whether it is impersonal, flatly photographic, as with Sinclair Lewis, or a high-colored, stylized backdrop, as with John Dos Passos; whether it is used to enhance social significance, as in Steinbeck's *In Dubious Battle*; whether its influence tinges the medium of expression, as it does in *How Green Was My Valley*; or whether the setting itself is protagonist, and nature becomes a mystic arbiter of human destinies, as in Francis Brett Young's *Undergrowth*. Observe the visualization of place, the apprehension of the effect of environment upon character that is made possible by this element of the novelist's art. Note the descriptive and factual values that authenticity of setting imparts to many undistinguished novels; and note also the pitfall of the so-called "pathetic fallacy," which invests nature with human emotions and turns simple reality into artificial romanticism. This pitfall finds illustration, I think, in *Undergrowth*.

Characterization.—Primarily the novelist is concerned with human beings; his art is determined by his power to impart the illusion of life to the characters whose experiences are set before the reader. Consider the skill, sympathy, and penetration with which the nature of the characters is revealed; whether they are sentient creatures with their own dimensions, their own personalities, or whether they are cut-outs pasted on a flat background, puppets pulled to galvanized movement. Are they types, embodying some trait or quality, symbolic or satiric or allegoric (this is in part true of *Anthony Adverse*); or are they individuals, even though typical individuals, with characteristics and temperaments essentially their own? Have they free will? Is the development of each consistent with the individual personality, or are their actions conditioned by a formalized plot pattern or the exigency of a dramatic climax? Are their natures revealed in their own direct speech and action and immediate thoughts (as in *The Grapes of Wrath*), or through stream-of-consciousness retrospect (as in *Kitty Foyle*), or by dialogue and descriptive commentary (as in *Gone with the Wind*), or by elaborate analysis (as in *The Last Puritan*)? Sound appreciation of a novel's qualities of character delineation requires of

a reviewer a sense of values both in human behavior and in literary expression. Too many reviewers accept as "strong" or "convincing" character portrayal the crude and stenciled pattern that sets virtuous characters and villainous ones in black and white contrast (as in Caldwell's *The Dynasty of Death* and sequel); that presents everyone as either worthy or contemptible, and so offers no real character portrayal at all. Others dismiss with resentment or shrinking distaste characters they find unpleasant or reprehensible, without recognizing fundamental truth or inherent vitality in the portrayal.

Structure.—Theme (idea), subject, plot (action), setting, characterization (human nature), are the chief elements that compose the structure of a novel. The structure should have unity. That is, while there may be many different parts and many complex variations in the whole body of material used, that material should be so organized as to establish a unified experience that is realizable in a progressive development from beginning to conclusion. There is unity in this sense (though with much irrelevant surplusage) in the immense varied congeries of *Anthony Adverse*, just as unity is lacking in the development of the much shorter, more limited biographic novel by Kathleen Coyle, *Immortal Ease*. Perfection of unity in organization and artistry may be found in Hergesheimer's *Balisand* or in the many-faceted concentration of Willa Cather's *Lucy Gayheart*, which crystallizes into unified experience the fleeting life-phase of girlhood. In determining whether a novel has unity, consider whether it holds continuity of interest. Can you look back from the closing scene and see a clear and logical connection between the opening and the conclusion? Are the successive incidents, crises, climax, and aftermath in valid relationship with one another, or are they disconnected and irreconcilable? Have all the characters a reason for their existence in the narrative? Do superfluities of episode, exposition, or detail impair unity? Redundancy and prolixity (as in *Anthony Adverse*) are weaknesses common to many of the very long novels to which present-day novelists are addicted.

Form and type.—Consideration of form should be both specific and generic. Observe in what mold the novelist has cast his work, whether it is an autobiography, a memoir, a diary, told in letters, a retrospect, or a mixture of these and other forms with the third-person narrative that is still the most familiar form of fiction, in spite of the many metamorphoses effected by modern technique. *The Late George Apley* was molded in the form of a memoir, so skillful in its sedate satire that many readers believed it was a genuine contribution to biographic literature. Note also the type-group to which a given novel belongs. Anyone who reviews fiction should know what are the characteristics of an expressionistic novel, a stream-of-consciousness novel, a regional, or proletarian, or other novel that bears a distinctive stamp of form or treatment. Types, of course, merge and fluctuate and superimpose upon one another, but generic relationships should be distinguishable.

Treatment.—This is the novelist's technique, the method of construction and style of presentation. Consider whether the narrative is long and loosely woven (the "epic" manner), as in Priestley's *The Good Companions*, or short and closely knit (the "dramatic method"), as in Hughes's *In Hazard*, or

whether it combines length with solidity and sustained dramatic integration, as in *South Riding*. Are there many characters, participating in diverse, scattered incidents or adventures, or a small group upon whom action is focused? Does the narrative make use of the movie technique of the flash-back (a sudden doubling back upon itself) to bring out some essential prior scenes or incidents, or the close-up (interpolated vivid emotional detail or interior monologue) to deepen emotional response or convey motive for action? Today many different techniques may be used in a single novel (*In Hazard* is an example of this). The obvious gives way to allusion, to indirection, to latency; the stream of consciousness percolates the most arid plain of narrative. Try to determine whether treatment is predominantly romantic or realistic, objective or subjective, and observe how its nature is conveyed in verbal expression. Remember that present-day realism makes no concession to fastidious taste; profane, obscene, raw, and brutal language may be a means of evoking the particular kind of experience the novelist seeks to depict. There should be recognition of this by the reader; and also a perceptiveness of the literary art, the essential truth, and the significant purpose that justify the use of sordid or repulsive material.

Significance.—Significance of a novel may lie in its intrinsic nature, in its purpose, in its accessory material. Consider whether it is primarily a novel of character, of setting, of specific subject or purpose; whether it is a study of individual character (as in Pearl Buck's *Other Gods*), or of a segment of human society (as in *South Riding*), or of conflicting ideas (as in Thornton Wilder's *Heaven's My Destination*); whether it expounds a special thesis (as in *Dynasty of Death*), or records aspects of the contemporary world scene (as in *Europe to Let*), or launches a social challenge (as in *Native Son*). Specialized factual exactitude may give significance to novels otherwise of minor import: as *Horse Shoe Bottoms* offers a well-founded two-generation chronicle of mine workers in Illinois and as *Snow-Water* has significance as an authentically based narrative of the beginnings of irrigation in Colorado. Or significance may be conveyed, not factually, but by way of fantasy, symbolism, or allegory, as in many of Robert Nathan's novels, in H. G. Wells's extravaganzas, in Sylvia Townsend Warner's delicate, prismatic tales; by satirical gaiety (*The Ugly Dachshund*); or by spontaneous humor, as in Ross's *The Education of Hyman Kaplan*. Many novels have a significance of idea, of implicit meaning, as well as explicit significance of obvious subject, of plot and character development; often they have also an added factual or informational significance, as in Nevil Shute's *An Old Captivity*, with its careful technical detail of transatlantic aviation. These subsidiary significances should be discerned, and the values they hold indicated.

Besides reading the book itself, it is desirable in preparation for a review to read also any available criticisms or commentary relating to it. Information on the book jacket is often a present help in time of need, giving personal facts that may not be commonly familiar. But avoid the temptation to "lift" the blurb-writer's alluring and skillful sentences and incorporate them into what is presumably an original review. If the author is unfamiliar, material

about his previous work and personal background should be sought; for this any public library will supply reference material; or a request to the author's publishers will usually bring prompt and helpful response. Related material of this kind is a great help in making both book and writer take on specific identity for an audience. Indeed, the reviewer should always seek to establish a sense of personal friendship or vital relationship with the writer whose personality is infused into his work; when such a sense of personal relationship is realized, it will often bring that later and continuing companionship which is one of the enduring joys of reading. This sense of personal relationship is born of intellectual or imaginative sympathy; it is not at all dependent upon actual acquaintance with an author as an individual. A review that centers upon a reviewer's brief contact or casual acquaintance with the author under discussion is too often a rather tiresome excursion into egocentricity—a setting forth of personal trivia, a preening of plumage because the reviewer once went up a canyon with John Burroughs or spent an afternoon with Gertrude Atherton.

Consider now the formulation of a review. Here, too, proficiency cannot be acquired without study, experiment, and practice. Current review periodicals should be read and their reviews studied for organization and technique, but the review that is to be spoken must have its own different individuality. Good reviewing in periodicals and newspapers is more formalized, more detailed in critical analysis, and more elaborate and "literary" in expression than the spoken review should ever attempt to be. For the latter, simplicity, clarity, and the establishment of a magnetic current between speaker and listeners are first requisites. There must be co-ordination and progression in the presentation of the book. The review should have a skeleton, a basic plan; it should be pleasing and flexible in expression; it should arrest and hold the listeners' interest. Whatever order of progression is chosen should be consistently followed, neither jumbled nor disconnected, but—like effective plot development—an ordered movement from a beginning through a middle to an end. There is no fixed pattern. A review may open with information about the author and pass on to the book; it may open with consideration of the book and close with information about the author. Transitions should be clear and sustained, not confused and fragmentary; and the interest aroused at the beginning should be clinched in closing. The special test of the reviewer's skill lies in an effective beginning and an effective ending. A good spoken review should open with an arresting statement, perhaps linking the book to some immediate topic of interest, perhaps crystallizing its theme, or visualizing its setting, or evoking the author's personality and purpose. It should close with a definite finale, that may be a summation of qualities, or a reaffirmation of judgment, or a climactic scene, or a selection that illuminates or interprets the nature of the book; but whatever it is, it should leave the listeners with unquenched interest and a deepened sense of book values.

A review often gains in accent and variety from provocative selections from the book. It may present some vivid scene that indicates emotional or dramatic qualities, or it may include extracts that reveal striking character portrayal, that

show play of humor or charm of expression. It will almost always have to emphasize certain aspects of the book and condense or telescope others, rather than attempt completeness of exposition; yet it should manage to convey adequate realization of the novel as a whole. Make clear the meaning of an obscure title that in itself subtly transmits the author's theme—*Eyeless in Gaza*; *The Eye of the Fish*. Never "tell the story" in a long and involved narrative, larded with proper names and wound about with monotonous connectives. Plot should be treated as the outgrowth of the subject, the manifestation of the theme. Specify its chief elements and suggest its course of action as vividly as possible, but never suck out the whole content or reveal the full climax, leaving the reader only an empty shell, for the purpose of a review is not to satiate, but to stimulate, to invite others to participation in a rewarding or provocative experience. Try to transmit a sense of the book's own personality and thus to convey its strength and weakness, but avoid prolixity and entanglement in detail.

Clear, simple, and graphic expression is of great importance. A varied vocabulary and interest in word use are needed to escape the bondage of the clichés, those worn-out superlatives that are common denominators of a book's popularity. Here a good thesaurus (say, Roget or March) offers a lifeline. Avoid elaborate phrasing and the use of the more recondite terms of literary criticism. A review sprinkled with words such as "adumbration," "perdurable," "pastiche," "mimesis" and phrases such as "the criteria of social norms," "affirmations of surrealisme" may be deeply impressive as evidence of a reviewer's profundity, but it is likely to cast a blight upon his audience. Humor is a sharpener of perceptions, a tonic to assimilation. It conveys criticism cogently, yet with amenity; its effect upon an audience is both stimulating and mellowing. But it should be discerning humor, intelligently directed, not a wisecracking flippancy that finds derision easier than understanding. . . .

These suggestions have ranged from theory to practice, from the obvious to the implicit. For the experienced reviewer they cover familiar ground; but the continuing influx of newcomers into this field of book influence should justify a formulation of purpose and procedure. . . . There should be . . . a more balanced appraisal of values, fewer follow-my-leader opinions, . . . and a fuller realization that the literature of today is the expression and interpretation of the life of today.

MEYER BERGER *Meyer Berger was born in 1898 of poor Jewish parents who lived in New York City. He has been a newspaperman since the days when he sold papers and ran copy for the New York World. Since 1928 he has been on the staff of the New York Times, where he has won many plaudits, including Stanley Walker's comment in City Editor: "One of the best."*

DIANA TRILLING *Diana Trilling is the regular reviewer*

ROSEMARY DAWSON

of fiction for *The Nation*. For further investigation, see her article "What Has Happened to Our Novels?" in *Harper's Magazine* for May, 1944. Rosemary Dawson is a reviewer of books for *The Saturday Review of Literature*.

Three Book Reviews of A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN

I USED to think that some day, when the mood came on me and there was time for it, I might sit down and tell the story of my old block in Williamsburg in Brooklyn. The story would be about rather strange kids and strange grown-ups, about Dorney Rogers who spent all his pennies for kerosene and blew the kerosene from his mouth at lighted matches held far out in front of him, just to exult over the flare. About the fat butcher who was a sadist and dragged his ninety-five-pound wife across the floor by her hair until she screamed so the whole block could hear it. Crazy George would be in it and Blubber Green who always fell into alcoholic slumber on the Crosstown trolley-car tracks. Diamond Julia would thread in and out of my story, flame-faced and never sober, awkwardly pitching rocks at the kids who followed and tormented her. Jaggers would be in it, too; Jaggers who went to the death house for killing a Pole in a saloon brawl, but who came back to the block and sat for years in a second-floor window staring at nothing until he died in that position.

Betty Smith, though, has done the job in this delightful volume about Williamsburg as she knew it over thirty years ago. With incredible memory for detail she has brought in Gimpy, the sly old candy-store man who waylaid little girls in the back of his store. She has pinned to paper, in three-dimensional writing, Cheap Charlie who cheated little boys and girls with the prize board that never really had the number in it for the roller skates or the big doll. She gives an excellent portrait of the junk dealer to whose untidy shop little boys and girls would bring their treasures of tinfoil, brass, copper and lead pipe. She has reproduced the cries, the odors and the squalor of old Graham Avenue and its tenements: the hot-eyed old pickle peddlers, overstuffed mothers, breast-feeding their babies with Oriental disregard for the stares of passing little boys and girls.

The publishers choose to call the book a novel, yet it is hardly that. There is little story, or plot, as the reader encounters it in the average novel. This is rather a stringing together of memory's beads and the workmanship is extraor-

The review by Meyer Berger is reprinted by permission of *The New York Times Book Review*, from the August 22, 1943, issue.

The review by Diana Trilling is reprinted by permission of *The Nation* from the September 4, 1943, issue.

The review by Rosemary Dawson is reprinted by permission of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, from the September 11, 1943, issue.

dinarily good. This is autobiography. Above all, it is a faithful picture of a part of Brooklyn that was mostly slums and misery. The picture is softened by almost poetic handling. It is old Williamsburg done, more or less, as James Farrell did the Chicago slums, but the writing is more subtle and the gentler woman's viewpoint gives it clear advantages. The same people are in it, and they use the same language, but Miss Smith gives her story strength without using the words that little boys like to scrawl on red-brick walls and subway pillars.

The portraits of pitiful John Nolan, Uncle Willie Flittman and his enemy, the milk-wagon horse; poor Flossie Gaddis, who hides a withered arm from the beaux she hungrily seeks; Sissy, who draws her beaux too easily and slips from one "marriage" to another—all these are unforgettable. The book swarms with living people. When these characters sing, Betty Smith puts in their mouths, whether they be drunk or sober, the words of their songs—"Molly Malone," "Walter, Walter Wildflower," and the songs that little girls shrilled under the stars on hot summer nights when stoops were heavy with neighbors.

The book tells about the changes in the street with the coming of the first World War. Francie Nolan, the central figure in the book, has moved out of the dream world that was bounded, more or less, by the awesome atmosphere of the local public library, by the streets that lead to the neighborhood stores and by the view from the fire escape. The tree in the book's title is the evil-scented weedlike ailanthus, which grows out of old cellars, in dirty corner lots—anywhere in the sun-baked Williamsburg streets that the wind has blown dust into little heaps.

"It grew lushly, but only in tenement districts," the author tells you. "You took a walk on a Sunday afternoon and came to a nice neighborhood. You saw one of these trees through the iron gate leading to someone's yard and you knew that soon that section of Brooklyn would get to be a tenement district. That was the kind of tree it was. It liked poor people."

—MEYER BERGER

2

BY NOW you will have been assailed by the avalanche of advertising extolling the virtues of Betty Smith's "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn." I am a little bewildered by so much response to so conventional a little book. Like the heroine of her first novel, Miss Smith was born and raised in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, but even without knowing this fact we could guess that the story was autobiographical. Women authors, especially, always regard their own childhoods as if the process of growing up were an experience reserved for people who will one day have the sensibility to write a book about it, and Miss Smith even falls into the common error of forgetting that it takes time to learn the language of literary sensibility: at sixteen, even at eleven, her Francie Nolan thinks with the mind of the mature Betty Smith. I quote at random: "She began to understand that her life might seem revolting to some educated people. She wondered, when she got educated, whether she'd be ashamed of her background. Would she be ashamed

of her people; ashamed of handsome papa who had been so light-hearted, kind, and understanding; ashamed of brave and truthful mama, who was so proud of her own mother, even though granma couldn't read or write; ashamed of Neely, who was such a good, honest boy? No! No! If being educated would make her ashamed of what she was, then she wanted none of it." Well, I submit that these are neither the thoughts nor the words of an adolescent girl, but the thoughts and words of a mature person creating a "literary" image of herself as an adolescent girl.

Because Francie Nolan is very poor, Irish, a Catholic, and I suppose because a member of her family drinks, I have seen "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" compared to the novels of James Farrell, and all to the credit of Miss Smith's novel. This makes me very sad both for the condition of fiction reviewing and for Mr. Farrell, whatever his faults as a novelist of stature. Of course Francie Nolan's story is more cheerful than Danny O'Neill's and a more popular commodity, but surely popular taste should be allowed to find its emotional level without being encouraged to believe that a "heart-warming" experience is a serious literary experience.

—DIANA TRILLING

3

THIS story of Francie Nolan and her childhood in the slums of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, has the charm of accurately remembered details, set down simply and with feeling. Francie knows the rag-picker and the saloon keeper, she knows what it feels like to be hungry and never have quite enough to eat, to be cold and never have enough to wear. And the reader, along with Francie, begins to deplore Johnny Nolan's drunkenness, to love Aunt Sissy, and to suffer through Francie's first days at the overcrowded public school.

Betty Smith has remembered well. She has set down even the smallest of childhood's joys and sorrows, and more—she has given them the emphasis of childhood. And so we find that the actual physical discomfort of life at the Nolans' fades into the background and the thrill of learning to read or the hatred of the schoolteacher become all-important. As long as the book moves with the rhythm of life in Williamsburg and remains true to that setting it is a beautiful and moving piece of work.

But toward the end of the novel the rhythm is broken. As soon as Francie is out in the world, getting a job and finding the first love of her life, the novel takes on more of the mechanics of the usual popular piece of fiction and becomes less real. This is due in the most part to the sudden crowding of events in the last third of the story. The first two-thirds of the book show Francie and her relatives and friends working out their relationships with the world. What interests the reader is what Francie is going to make of the experiences which open up to her. It is not important that Francie's mother has another baby—what *is* important is the stage of Francie's growth—her feeling of being adult and the master of the crisis, and then the lonely, little-girl feeling of being left out while the grownups take charge. Even with the other char-

acters this is true. We are not so much worried about the state of Aunt Sissy's morals as we are about whether or not she can achieve her major triumph in adopting a baby and making everyone believe it is actually her own. It's Aunt Sissy's own endeavors which are thrilling and her attitude toward the things which make up her world.

And so it is a disappointment to find at the end that things are solved for the Nolans not through their own efforts, but by the intrusion of a perfectly pleasant and affable stranger who plans to marry Katie Nolan and to adopt Francie and the other children, to give them college educations and all the advantages. This is not what the reader wants for the Nolans; it is not true enough to the promise of the book. Because, after all, families like the Nolans still exist in Brooklyn, and since the book has a universal attitude toward life and childhood in the beginning—a sort of common denominator made up of remembered, true experiences—it should carry this attitude to the end. It should show a way out for the families of the slums—or the lack of a way out—with the same truthfulness that it showed slum life while the family was living it.

However, there are beautiful passages in the book, and on the whole it is a moving, tender, and fine piece of work.

—ROSEMARY DAWSON

GEORGE HARDY *The following comments on Arrowsmith, by Sinclair Lewis, were written as an assignment in English by a college freshman. The novel in question, an attack on the evils of institutionalism in American medicine, is considered the most significant of the author's many attempts to mirror the foibles of his own time.*

AN EVALUATION OF *ARROWSMITH*

ANY ATTEMPT to determine the author's purpose in writing this novel is complicated by the wide variety of means which he uses to achieve his end. The story covers almost every phase of the medical profession, and some allied fields, and ranges in tone from the sheerest farce, tempered withal by some sardonic touches, to bitter tragedy. Through it all runs, however, Lewis' hatred of the pompous, the Men of Measured Merriment. Lewis is pitiless when he is attacking the ideal of Success and hardly less so in his depiction of the evils of institutionalism, but he is not content merely to give a picture of the faults he sees. He has attempted to set up another ideal to replace those he attacks—that of scientific truth, which is free alike

"An Evaluation of *Arrowsmith*." Reprinted by permission of the author.

from the delusions of the money-grubbers and those of such would-be reformers as Pickerbaugh and Capitola McGurk, whose enterprises, no matter how sincere, reek of self-seeking.

The numerous stuffed shirts and success-seekers depicted by Lewis are notable for their apparent variety, but even more important is their essential kinship. The professors at Winnemac, the Tozers, the country doctors, the staff at Dawson Hunziker and at the Rouncefield clinic, the researchers at McGurk, the various "social leaders," all seem widely different on the surface, but as they are contrasted, one by one, with the stumbling honesty of Arrowsmith, which he can never succeed in repressing by his efforts to conform, with the sure contempt of Gottlieb for all that is false, with the incomparable Leora, and with the lusty freedom from pretense of Sondelius, they bear traces of having come from the same mould.

It is perhaps because of Sondelius' freedom from the smugness of the country doctors, his contempt for the success pursued so methodically by Angus Duer, for the commercialism of Roscoe Geake, and for the petty politics of the McGurk institute, as well as his vast humanitarian instinct (so different from that of an Almus Pickerbaugh) and his living vitality that Lewis so obviously likes him, and uses him to hold the pretentious up to scorn. The death of such a man makes all the more bitter the final successes of Tubbs, Pickerbaugh, and the rest.

Gottlieb's end is perhaps even more tragic. His contempt for unsureness, for pretension and untruth, contrast almost pathetically with his failures at Winnemac and as director of the Institute, with his loneliness, and with the final darkening of the bright sure flame of his genius. He no sooner begins to take on heroic stature than Lewis moves closer and shows his essential unsureness, and our awe is turned to pity. The fruits of devotion to the ideal of truth are apparently bitter at their best.

But freedom from pretension is apparently not enough, nor is dislike for the ideal of success, if something is lacking to fill the vacuum created by their absence. When Clif Clawson is reintroduced late in the story we see that he is not, as Martin had supposed, another "barbarian" like himself and Wickett, in spite of his crudeness and vulgarity. Wickett had given up everything because of devotion to one ideal, but Clif had found no ideal. The contrast between Martin's memories and the real Clif, and the breaking-up of the two, serve to emphasize the changes that have taken place in Arrowsmith, as well as the ways in which he has remained unchanged, and the essential inadequacy of Clif's character.

The women in Arrowsmith's life further Lewis' purpose chiefly in the matter of characterization. Arrowsmith's philosophy of life and his essential honesty are contrasted with the sentimentality and pretense of Madeline Fox. In the love of Martin and Leora, we are given a deeper understanding of character than would be possible in any other way, and the death of Leora is the most tragic incident in the novel, perhaps the most important turning point in Martin's life. The depiction of Leora is also an extremely fine piece of char-

acterization, certainly one of the best in the novel. Joyce Lanyon seems to serve partly as a foil for Leora, an indication that Arrowsmith will never find, or, perhaps, need, another woman who can take her place; and partly to show that this life with her, also, is not the haven he has needed so long. Martin's relations with Orchid served to show that, after all, he was not perfect, and possessed a generous quota of human failings, but its very triviality and naivete, together with Leora's reaction, at the time and afterward, accentuate the picture of the relation between them which a dozen Orchids could not destroy.

Lewis' dominant purpose in writing this novel is to satirize the characteristics and institutions of which he writes—to hold them up to ridicule. He has done this very effectively by allowing them to condemn themselves, presenting them with just the right amount of exaggeration and sardonic comment to make their shortcomings all too apparent. His purpose was not to write humor, but rather to show the exasperating, sometimes tragic, consequences of each character's particular brand of stupidity, smugness, or dishonesty. His depiction is realistic, but not disinterested; it is often one-sided, but it is sincere and written with crusading zeal, and is, on the whole, justified.

The novel is distinguished by the fact that it is composed of a large number of somewhat unrelated chains of events, each chain corresponding to a phase of the medical profession and an era in Arrowsmith's life. By the use of a large number of such details, Lewis has given his novel a sort of here-and-now universality, and made it a powerful commentary on the ambitions of the politicians and commercialists, the stupid and the vulgar, in a realm whose very spirit should be honesty and truth. Beyond this it was apparently not his purpose or desire to go.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

GREAT INDIVIDUALISTS

(*An Editorial, October 22, 1938*)

IT MAY not be an accident that the two Broadway plays which have met this season with the highest praise from the critics are "Hamlet" and "Abe Lincoln in Illinois." Shakespeare's creation and America's native son were both puzzled liberals. Both were deeply affected by the injustices of the world and by their own seeming inability to right them. Lincoln came close to in-

"Great Individualists," from the editorial page of *The New York Times*, October 22, 1938. Reprinted by permission.

sanity at one stage in his young life. Hamlet feigned insanity for a purpose, and the commentators have written volumes trying to decide whether the deception did not in the end become grim reality. Lincoln struggled out of his despairing mood, put the ghost of little Ann Rutledge in the back of his mind with the equally lovely ghost of universal righteousness, married Mary Todd, compromised with many expediciencies, composed the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural, and saved the Union. Hamlet went down in the muck of circumstances. The mood of Hamlet and the mood of Lincoln, the predicament of Hamlet and the predicament of Lincoln, are as modern as television, as old as the hills.

These personalities fascinate us, as those of men marching swiftly to triumph do not. We have seen enough of blatant certainty. We are repelled by the fanatics who dominate nations, and by the half-bovine, half-tigerish qualities they bring out in their followers. Either Hamlet or Lincoln would have suffered less internal torture if he had been sure of what was truth, sure of his own relationship to truth. The final, decisive action, the irrevocable position, were hard for each of them, for each was aware of shadings, each realized the difficulty of arriving, in action, at an absolute right against an absolute wrong.

We can talk of autocracy and democracy until the words are worn as smooth as ancient dimes. The issue behind them is the freedom of the individual human soul. In an absolutist society the struggles of a Hamlet or a Lincoln have no meaning, because their outcome has no effect. In a free society these agonies of the private conscience are significant because they can be resolved into action. They are the price paid for freedom. Democracy is no affair of masses—to call it such is to libel it. It is the splitting up of voiceless masses into individuals, each, within his grasp and capacity, the master of his own fate. The rights of the people are the rights of the persons who collectively constitute the people.

Out of pain and travail, out of free decisions and inner struggle, the race grows in wisdom and stature. We of the democratic nations take the risks, suffer the pains, for the sake of the growth made possible. Hamlet and Lincoln speak for us, albeit tragically. In the lands of the iron heel and conscripted mind their words are distorted, or are not heard.

BROOKS ATKINSON *is one of the best-known and most highly esteemed newspapermen in the profession. He edited his own paper when he was eight, graduated from Harvard, taught at Dartmouth. He worked for a time as reporter and reviewer on the Boston Transcript and in 1922 went to The New York Times as book reviewer; since 1925 he has been drama critic on the same paper and a potent influence, incidentally, on the fate of Broadway productions. Author of a study of Thoreau, essays, travel books, Atkinson covered World War II from China, and has recently been made Moscow correspondent of the Times.*

LINCOLN'S PRAIRIE YEARS

Kinsmen, you shall behold
Our stage, in mimic action, mould
A man's character.

ALTHOUGH those verses come from the introduction to John Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln" of twenty years ago, they can also serve Robert Sherwood's "Abe Lincoln in Illinois," which is just a week old. It was a tremendously moving play that John Drinkwater wrote—classical in style, medieval miracle in its approach to the subject. But Mr. Sherwood's somber tale of the prairie years, in which Raymond Massey is giving a transcendent performance, is infinitely superior because it is written out of the instinctive understanding of an American with a broad point of view. Mr. Sherwood shares the common wonder that Americans feel toward their national idol. As a citizen of the contemporary world, he also sees in Lincoln's mercy and humanity a way of living for today. This story of the shiftless and morose prairie politician who became the Great Emancipator is constantly nudging against the shrill preoccupation of the jangled world in which we are now blindly existing. Through the life and spoken thoughts of Lincoln Mr. Sherwood has been able to express his own high-minded convictions with a deeper emotional force than ever before. Here, among many pungent and homely things, are some of the charitable principles we need for personal guidance today.

To some extent it is a mystic story with tragic overtones. The career of Lincoln partakes of infinite wisdom. One need not be a sophist to perceive destiny at work in his life story. Even the hard-headed scholar comes up against things in his biography that cannot be reconciled with the usual philosophy of cause and effect. Like the victory of the American revolutionary army against impossible odds at home; like the acrimonious founding of the nation on democratic principles of liberty, and the triumph over enemies and inexperience inside and out during the first few critical years—the career and martyrdom of Lincoln are larger than life.

Mr. Sherwood is a realist and disposed to speak bluntly; he does not let his wits woolgather and his "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" is no idyll or song of devotion. But by close adherence to the facts it is still the improbable tale of a raw youth out of the wilderness who was limp inside from melancholy and constitutionally unable to make a decision—without ambition and practically without self-respect. Circumstances over which he had no visible control, circumstances which, in fact, he actively resisted out of a lack of self-confidence and a brooding distrust of the world, put into his large-boned hands the ordeal of

"Lincoln's Prairie Years," from *The New York Times*, October 23, 1938. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

the nation. He was tragically self-contained. When, in the current play, the Eastern politicians come to Springfield to look him over as a safe candidate for President, his adder-tongued and neurotic wife confides in Joshua Speed some of the experience that has bitten into her pride—

I've read about many that have gone up in the world, and all of them seemed to have to fight to assert themselves every inch of the way, against the opposition of their enemies and the lack of understanding of their own friends. But he's never had any of that. . . . He had some poem in mind, about a life of woe, along a rugged path, that leads to some future doom, and it has been an obsession with him. . . . I'm tired—I'm tired to death. I thought I could help to shape him, as I knew he should be, and I've succeeded in nothing—but in breaking myself.

There is no mystery about his moral strength. Some of it he must have inherited from his mother; some of it he learned from his stepmother and the good people who loved him in New Salem and some of it must have grown out of the wilderness solitude where he spent his boyhood. His great physical strength, which set him apart as "wrestlin'" champion of the neighborhood, made it easy for him to defend and act on what he believed; his purity of motive could not be beaten out of him. Despite, or perhaps because of, his provincial birth and upbringing, his imagination was broad and active. Mr. Sherwood especially values the sweep and scope of his mind. Even when he is postmastering in New Salem his thoughts are enkindled by a newspaper dispatch about labor riots in the textile mills of France and the effect they might have on America.

He is constantly looking through facts to general principles. In his debate with Stephen Douglas he describes the topical slave question as "the old issue of property rights versus human rights—an issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall long have been silent." In his farewell speech to the people of Springfield, which Mr. Sherwood has put together from several speeches of that period, he honors the sentiment of the Declaration of Independence not on a narrow national basis but on universal terms: "This sentiment was the fulfillment of an ancient dream, which men have held through all time, that they might one day shake off their chains and find freedom in the brotherhood of life." He concludes with a principle, both personal and general, that should lie at the core of all our thinking: "Let us live to prove that we can cultivate the natural world that is about us, and the intellectual and moral world that is within us, so that we may secure an individual, social and political prosperity, whose course shall be forward, and which, while the earth endures, shall not pass away."

If all this sounds as though "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" were a religious or political crusade, this column is at fault for dwelling on details. Mr. Sherwood is too human a playwright to assume the solemn manner. Beginning in our theatre a little more than a decade ago as a humorist, he still relishes the dry phrase. His sense of humor gives him a sense of proportion. Having a tolerant mind, he enjoys the stiff-jointed oldsters who think that the world has gone

to the dogs and also the hot-headed youngsters who think that virtue is just beginning. Most of all, he loves the character of Lincoln, and in this long, plainly written drama he has told honestly the savory story of those early days amid the familiar men and women of the prairie. In the chief part Raymond Massey gives a glorious performance—rude and lazily humorous on the surface, but lighted from within. He suffuses the simplicity of Mr. Sherwood's writing with the luminous beauty of inspired acting. Fortunately, the entire performance, under Elmer Rice's illuminating direction, is all of one piece, and "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" is a profoundly moving portrait of our human lore and our spiritual heritage.

THE EDITORS OF *TIME*

ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

FIRST production of the five playwrights (Maxwell Anderson, S. N. Behrman, Sidney Howard, Elmer Rice, Robert E. Sherwood) who last season decided to form an independent producing unit, *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* should see them triumphantly launched. An episodic story of Lincoln from his early Ann Rutledge days to his election as President, it once more demonstrates the magic of the Great Emancipator's personality.

Lincoln is the most living and appealing figure in U. S. history because he expresses with the greatest glow the national dream of democracy and freedom. He is therefore, in addition to being a warm, sturdy, exciting human being, a permanent symbol who serves U. S. drama as the house of Atreus served the Greek, or as Faust and Don Juan serve the writers of the world. Lincoln's story is well-known, well-loved, an advantage for the playwright greater than the most smashing plot would be; for an audience bringing with it a quivering mass of associations is ready beforehand to participate in the playwright's particular interpretation of Lincoln's life.

Playwright Sherwood's interpretation is the child of the hour. Psychologically his Lincoln, beautifully played by Canadian-born actor Raymond Massey, is familiar enough: a salty, sinewy smalltown fellow¹ cursed with a submerged streak of loneliness and bitterness, plagued by an unsympathetic wife and haunted by an unshakable sense of doom. But Sherwood's chief

"Abe Lincoln in Illinois," from *Time*, October 24, 1938. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

¹ Dug up by Playwright Sherwood was a characteristic Lincoln crack concerning his wife's family: "The Todds are very high-grade people. They spell their name with two *d*'s which is pretty impressive when you consider that one *d* was enough for God."

interest in Lincoln is spiritual, not psychological: it consists of vividly, though not altogether convincingly, tracing Lincoln's growth from an indolent, unambitious "artful dodger" who wanted to be left alone, to a suddenly aroused and embattled champion of human rights. And Sherwood is interested in that Lincoln for what he can symbolize to the world today.

Sherwood does not indulge in any awkward sermonizing. Instead, he quotes from Lincoln's own vibrant speeches, particularly the famed "House Divided" one, and lets their message carry forward into the present. *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* is a frequently inexperienced play, slow in getting started, discontinuous in structure, too literary in some of its writing, too emotional in some of its appeal. But it is also a fervent play, burning fiercely with the spirit of what Lincoln, rightly or wrongly, has come to stand for in the hearts of his countrymen.

CLIFTON FADIMAN *Most of us know Clifton Fadiman (b. 1904) as the Master of Ceremonies of "Information Please," which he has directed since 1938. Others will recall him as the book reviewer of The New Yorker from 1933 to 1943. Before that, he was connected in an editorial capacity with several publishing houses. The following essay on E. B. White, one of the authors of "Farewell, My Lovely," found elsewhere in this volume, is the enthusiastic tribute of a friend rather than a dispassionate evaluation of a fellow-writer. As long as there is no confusion as to motive, there is room for both in the field of criticism.*

IN PRAISE OF E. B. WHITE, REALIST

IT HAS been remarked—ever since Van Wyck Brooks pointed it out some decades ago—that the superior American writer often becomes famous, wealthy, influential, even more skillful, but only rarely becomes mature. Maturity still makes us uneasy. It is not irrelevant that the middle-aged heroes of the whisky advertisements have obviously been selected by virtue of their betrayal of no sign of any thought process whatsoever behind their photogenic distinction. Many of our writers find growing up not merely difficult but socially and emotionally unrewarding. Those who do insist on developing whether their readers like it or not are freaks.

E. B. White is such a freak.

He is also one of the most useful political thinkers in this country.

He is also one of the finest living writers of prose in this country.

This triad of statements will embarrass Mr. White, who not only writes

"In Praise of E. B. White, Realist," from *The New York Times Book Review*, June 10, 1945. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

as if he were a modest man—that's merely a trick—but actually is one. It may possibly arouse skepticism or even irritation in many others, including those who admire Mr. White for certain qualities that are as delightful as they are relatively unimportant. Agreed, he has the charm of a dozen Irishmen. He is a master of light verse. His sketches of country living are humorous and poetical. He is fey. He is whimsical. He is funny. He is beautifully absurd. Because he is all these things there is some danger that he will be considered a minor writer. I use the word danger advisedly. Thoreau was put down, is still being put down, as a "nature writer" and an eccentric. The truth is that we have not yet caught up with Thoreau, and unless we do so our democracy, which is identical with the globe's democracy, is by so much the more in peril.

In using the solemn word major I run some risk of alienating people, including the subject of this essay. Nevertheless, I will use the word major. E. B. White is a major writer. He is a major writer because his ideas and sentiments are large and basic and because, within the limitations of his chosen style and form, he writes about them perfectly.

In these remarks (intended not as a critical essay but merely as a longish advertisement constructed to induce you to buy a few of Mr. White's ideas) I propose to write about him as if he were major.

In the early years of *The New Yorker* magazine, edited then, now, and let us hope forever by the nonpareil Harold Ross, E. B. White contributed excellent light verse and various prose oddments. For about ten years prior to 1938 he wrote or rewrote the first page (Notes and Comment) each week. For several years thereafter he wrote small essays for Harper's magazine under the heading *One Man's Meat*, and is now back on Notes and Comment again. He has published a couple of books of light verse: "*Quo Vadimus*" (amusing sketches); "*Is Sex Necessary?*" (with James Thurber), still funny and still reasonably wise; "*Every Day Is Saturday*," a collection of *The New Yorker* pieces, and "*One Man's Meat*," mainly from the pages of Harper's. During the approximately twenty years covered by the publication of these frail-appearing volumes he has grown from a paragrapher to a writer, from a light-fingered original humorist to a light-giving original thinker. That *The New Yorker*, which is primarily a magazine of entertainment, should have been his seminary and his graduate school is a tribute to the flexibility and vision of its editor. What hath Ross wrought?

A sentence or so back I spoke of Mr. White as an original thinker. I do not mean that you will find much that is "new" in him. I mean only that his mind naturally works from origins. His most casual remarks, and most of them are quite casual, come out of a sense not only of where man is but of what he started from. They are almost always based, though rarely explicitly, on an original, that is, fundamental, proposition which mankind when it is rational accepts as true. I have been casting about for a good short example of this kind of thinking and believe I will start with this one:

Clubs, fraternities, nations—these are the beloved barriers in the way of a workable world; these will have to surrender some of their rights and some of their

ribs. A "fraternity" is the antithesis of *fraternity*. The first (that is, the order or organization) is predicated on the idea of exclusion; the second (that is, the abstract thing) is based on a feeling of total equality. Anyone who remembers back to his fraternity days at college recalls the enthusiasts in his group, the rabid members, both old and young, who were obsessed with the mystical charm of membership in their particular order. They were usually men who were incapable of genuine brotherhood or at least unaware of its implications. Fraternity begins when the exclusion formula is found to be distasteful. The effect of any organization of a social and brotherly nature is to strengthen rather than to diminish the lines which divide people into classes; the effect of states and nations is the same, and eventually these lines will have to be softened; these powers will have to be generalized. It is written on the wall that this is so. I'm not inventing it, I'm just copying it off the wall.

It is my contention that this is original reflection. It goes back to an original abstract idea accepted by mankind when mankind is thinking rationally—the idea of fraternity. It demonstrates that college fraternities represent the opposite of this idea. The "practical" proof, if you must have one, of the soundness of the reasoning is that this paragraph is quoted as one of the basic arguments in the recent program of educational reorganization drawn up by a committee of Amherst College teachers. As a result it is probable that fraternities will be abolished at Amherst. The plain fact of the matter is that, if all college men could think, the mere attentive reading by them of Mr. White's half-dozen sentences would result in the immediate abolition of all fraternities, which in turn would constitute a radical step away from infantilism.

Mr. White is a very useful writer because he is an abstract thinker who does not write abstractly. His base is always a generalization, which is what makes him more than a journalist; but the development is always concrete. Here is an example: In October, 1940, he wrote a semi-joshing, semi-indignant piece on the design of the American motor-car. In the course of it he said, "The ultimate goal of automobile designers is to produce a car into whose driving seat the operator will sink without a trace." After enlarging on that nice (and true) point he went on to state: "The public's passive acceptance of this strange vehicle is disheartening, as is the acceptance by other peoples of the strange modern governments which are destroying them in a dulcet fashion. I think there will some day be an awakening of a rude sort, just as there will some day inevitably be a union of democracies, after many millions have died for the treacherous design of nationalism."

Now the parallel between the design of the motor-car and the "treacherous design of nationalism" (read fascism) is more than a piece of wit. In the first place it is based on a true relationship: in both cases "the operator will sink without a trace." But underlying Mr. White's concrete statements are certain unmentioned abstract ideas: first, that liberty is a good; second, that passive acceptance, as against rational reflection, is an evil. For me this is philosophy quite in the Greek sense.

Philosophy is a calm vision of the whole, journalism an excited perception of the part. Mr. White once wrote that he liked the radio comments of the

late Hendrik Willem Van Loon on the day's events "because he has made them seem like a part of a whole, not like an isolated moment in time." This is profoundly true, and it is just as true that if radio commentators in general dared to talk about the events of the day as part of a whole the network officials would in unison shriek, "controversial." The result is that rational reflection is for the most part barred from the air. We get "forums" instead.

One of the results of having a vision of the whole is that Mr. White is forced to see the part for exactly what it is. If it is part of something big he sees that. (Remember the comment on college fraternities.) If it is part of something little he sees that. If the part is so small as to be almost nothing he cannot help seeing that too.

In July, 1938, he wrote, "It must have been two years ago that I attended a television demonstration at which it was shown beyond reasonable doubt that a person sitting in one room could observe the nonsense in another." Now this too is more than a witty and perfectly constructed sentence. It actually is a complete summary of all that is fundamentally important about television. Note that Mr. White does not say that it is not pleasant to observe nonsense. On the contrary, he knows, as we all do, that nonsense may be very pleasant, indeed, and interesting and even mildly necessary. But nonsense is small. The implication of the sentence is that television is small. It is small when it relays the contortions of a blues singer twenty feet into another room. It is exactly as small (though vastly more dreadful) when it relays the antics of diplomats ten thousand miles if the antics say no more than does the blues singer. Mr. White has his eye on the ends; the big network giants have their eye on the means. This is quite proper, because the size of the eyes involved is exactly proportioned to what they are interested in observing.

Television is only a small part of our national activity; but it is part of the mainspring of that activity, which is accumulation. Mr. White, even in his very early days, never lost sight of the design of that mainspring and of the basic fact that the accumulator, living under whatever system of government, is a slave. I offer two diverting samples (but all Mr. White's diversions, remember, seek rather than escape the center). 'Way back in *The New Yorker* of May 26, 1928, he printed this small quip:

A life insurance man told us of a remarkable business migration which took place in Madison Square recently. He said that one division of the Metropolitan Life moved en masse from one building to another, across the connecting bridge. At 2:30 the one hundred clerks ceased work and got up from their desks. At 2:41 the first desk was upended by a porter. At 3:35 the whole works had been transferred to the other building and electricians were installing the telephones. At 3:36 the clerks sat down and took up their duties. "And didn't any of the clerks escape?" we asked. But it was the wrong question.

It was, of course, the right question. It is we who have been giving the wrong answers.

Which leads to another brief entry, of May 13, 1933:

Mr. Edward A. Filene, the merchant of New England, told the alumni of Columbia University that we all want the same thing. "We all want some arrangement by which more people will be enabled to buy more things." Do we? That is a fair question to ask, because the cumulative goal of "more things" has remained almost unchallenged in all the long palaver of industrial recovery. A little research among the writings of another New Englander, who long ago turned out a passable essay on economy, reveals a more amusing, possibly a more sound, ideal. "The mass of men," he wrote, "lead lives of quiet desperation." And then, you will recall, he told of being present at the auction of a deacon's effects and of noticing, among the innumerable odds and ends representing the accumulation of a lifetime of endeavor, a dried tapeworm.

Thoreau remembered the tapeworm; White remembers the tapeworm; most of the rest of us merely manufacture the tapeworm.

He who remembers the tapeworm is the only crucially valuable commentator on American life. When Knute Rockne died, for instance, the nation gave way to an orgasm of grief, and President Hoover sent a eulogistic message. Mr. White (this was in 1931) uttered the one piercing comment on this national event. He said of it that Knute Rockne "was in the big money, and that was why Hoover happened to know about him." He then said the proper and human thing: "We see nothing wrong in the President's expressing grief over the loss of a beloved football coach," but, he went on, finally giving us the insight that marks the thinker and the critic of civilization, "from a diplomatic angle it seems to leave out certain other deceased members of college faculties, men who worked with undergraduates in groups other than groups of eleven. In our unofficial capacity, therefore, we take this opportunity to express the nation's grief in the death of all the other upright members of college faculties who died during the past year. We are sorry we don't know their names."

The point I should like to make about Mr. White's attitude is that it is not the attitude of an amiable, educated young man with high ideals. It is the attitude of a realist. His whimsical remarks are not sweet, though they are sweetly put; each one grasps a truth, holds it fast, exhibits it for all to see. That is why I have called this advertisement "E. B. White, Realist." His wit is realistic, his humor is realistic and, of course, his fantasy is realistic. It is, for example, the stock market reports that are fantastic, whereas it is Mr. White who is realistic in saying, "If a man wants to buy wheat, let him buy wheat and let the wheat be delivered to his door."

The spur of Mr. White's realism is the fact that he has the eye of a poet, a poet being a man who sees through things. Having the eye of a poet he is intensely aware of the unreality of our taken-for-granted environment. He is aware of the millions of substitutes for things, the millions of substitutes for ideas, the millions of substitutes for emotions, the millions of substitutes for human beings. Out of this awareness the sweet and bitter of his prose continually wells.

Perhaps I can make this clear by a personal reminiscence. About two weeks

ago I passed an average American day. In the course of it the following minor things occurred:

1. I received a bill for my quarterly dues—which I gladly paid—from the American Federation of Radio Artists. But I am not a radio “artist,” and neither are 99.9 per cent of my colleagues “artists.” I am a radio worker, my status being that of employe.

2. I lunched with an amiable publisher, a valued friend, who suggested to me four ideas for books which he said would prove popular. They would have, too; but it never once occurred to him that a book should come out of a writer’s mind and heart rather than out of a publisher’s inventive powers.

3. I noticed an advertisement for toffee showing two American soldiers, candy bar in hand, riding hell-for-leather in a jeep. The caption read: “When the going gets tough, it’s Blank’s Toffee.” The writer of the advertisement and the readers of it were apparently quite unaware that the statement is pure madness.

4. A placard in a hotel lobby attracted my attention. It informed me that a well-known band was returning to entertain the hotel’s clientele “by command.” It is obvious that nobody at all commanded the engagement of the band, and even if anybody did, the band would not play better or worse for that reason.

5. Returning home, I found a well-written letter from the alumni committee of my alma mater, urging me to contribute money. The money was to be used for seven clearly listed purposes. Not one of these purposes had anything whatsoever to do with the proper education of young men, although my college was founded for that purpose and, so far as I can see, should not be used for any other.

I have drawn up this list of items (selecting these five from a much larger day’s bag) to indicate that, for the most part, we live in a world whose connection with reality is of the frailest. The average man, one of whom is speaking to you, functions on a level, observes on a level, entertains himself on a level, noticeably remote from what is real. It is not that we lie to each other; it is that we think we are speaking truth. This is the essence of lunacy.

It is this accepted, conventional, respectable lunacy that Mr. White sees and writes about, as did Swift and every other important satirist that ever lived. But he has more opportunity than Swift, and vaster scope, because our lunacy is more extensive, more ramified and more attractively disguised.

The greatest of our lunacies can, however, be put with extreme simplicity. It is that humankind is fairly well determined to commit suicide. (We are doing it gradually of course, the two German Wars against Mankind being merely the first steps.) This is the larger lunacy that has engaged the attention of E. B. White, realist, during the last two or three years and has impelled him to write the words which I for one believe entitle him to be called one of the most useful political thinkers in this country.

If you will write The New Yorker, 25 West Forty-third Street, New York City, and ask for a reprint of certain editorials, they will probably send you

one. It is called "World Government and Peace" and is the work of a humorous writer and paragrapher, E. B. White. Perhaps I can give you the gist of it.

Mr. White grasped his central idea some time ago, long before Wendell Willkie gave it so dramatic an elaboration. On May 2, 1931, meditating on the popularity of Father Coughlin, he wrote:

We happen to be in a small way on the other side of the fence from Father Coughlin on all his points; but we must confess, after reading the statistics about his audience, that being on the other side of the fence from him is like standing all alone in the middle of a million-acre field. What an impressive thing it is! Talking against internationalism over the radio is like talking against rain in a rainstorm: the radio has made internationalism a fact, it has made boundaries look so silly that we wonder how mapmakers can draw maps without laughing; yet there stands Father Coughlin in front of the microphone, his voice reaching well up into Canada, his voice reaching well down into Mexico, his voice leaping national boundaries as lightly as a rabbit—there he stands, saying that internationalism will be our ruin, and getting millions of letters saying he is right.

That was fourteen years ago. Since then, by dint of using his mind, Mr. White has come a long way. He is now the most persuasive (I do not say systematic or exhaustive) American analyst of the lunacy that is nationalism and the sanity that is world law. Mind you, he is no "idealist"; he knows what the product (peace) is, he knows how much we must pay for it, and he knows what will happen if we do not buy.

Let's take a concrete problem that is bothering many of us, the problem of an international police force. Here are one long and one short White paragraph on the subject, dated May 15, 1943:

Dr. Gallup, the asker, has asked people whether they favor an international police force, and three out of four have said they do. That is very nice. It is also quite misleading. Asking a man whether he wants an international police force is like asking him whether he wants the Rockettes. Of course he does, but the question is not whether he thinks the Rockettes are a good idea but whether he knows what is in back of them, making them effective; in short, whether he is in earnest about the girls and willing to give up time and money to build a stage big enough to hold them, hire an orchestra loud enough to accompany them, buy costumes rich enough to adorn them, and in general sustain an organization orderly enough to give them meaning and make them click. Dr. Gallup should ask his question again, this time adding, "And you people realize, of course, that a police force is no good if simply used as a threat to strengthen agreements between independent powers, that to have meaning it must be the certified agent of the law, that to have law we must first have a constitutional world society, and that to achieve that each nation must say good-bye to its own freedom of action and to its long-established custom of doing as it damn well pleases. *Now* how many of you want an international police force?"

Here's one hand up, Dr. Gallup.

In other words, the disease is sovereignty; the cure is justice based on world law. As Mr. White puts it, "We are informed, almost hourly, that a new

world order is in the making, yet most of the talk is of policy and almost none of the talk is of law." The law must be planetary, thinks White (echoing, by the way, a large number of other thinkers, including Jesus) and our devotion to it must be planetary also. As the realist puts it, "If somebody were to discover rubber plantations on Mars, a world government would not only be a prime necessity, it would be a damn cinch."

Apparently we are waiting for the discovery of those rubber plantations on Mars, and, to pass the time while waiting, we are killing each other noisily, torturing each other insanely, and, worst of all, fooling ourselves fatuously. We talk of joint action but we do not know what the term means. History (perhaps we can remember some quite recent history such as Trieste and Poland) shrieks at us that as long as the world is run on the principle of national sovereignty, there will never be any tendency toward joint action until it is too late. "Therefore, the problem is not how to make force available for joint action, but how to make world government available so that action won't have to be joint."

I offer a final quotation from Mr. White, realist. The date is Feb. 24 of this year.

The delegates to San Francisco have the most astonishing job that has ever been dumped into the laps of a few individuals. On what sort of rabbit they pull from the hat hang the lives of most of us, and of our sons and daughters. If they put on their spectacles and look down their noses and come up with the same old bunny, we shall very likely all hang separately—nation against nation, power against power, defense against defense, people (reluctantly) against people (reluctantly). If they manage to bring the United Nations out of the bag, full blown, with constitutional authority and a federal structure having popular meaning, popular backing, and an overall authority greater than the authority of any one member or any combination of members, we might well be started up a new road.

The pattern of life is plain enough. The world shrinks. It will eventually be unified. What remains to be seen (through eyes that now bug out with mortal terror) is whether the last chapter will be written in blood or in Quink.

Who's crazy? Mr. White, a quiet, rather unimposing man, a mere writer, a humorist who makes a living writing for a small local magazine? Or the diplomats who are going through exactly the same motions that have produced wars for four thousand years? Is it possible that Mr. White and those like him are correct—and the big, busy men with their big, teeming, idea-empty portfolios wrong? Is it possible that Willkie was right—and that Eden and Molotoff and Stettinius are wrong? Is it possible that T. V. Soong (as Mr. White reported) said the only truly realistic thing at San Francisco when he announced flatly that in the cause of world peace China was willing to give up some of her sovereignty?

Of course Mr. White is not a practical man. He doesn't make much money and he will never be a Senator. He is—let's be brutal—just a poet. But I seem to remember a sentence he once wrote that stays with me: "A despot doesn't fear eloquent writers preaching freedom—he fears a drunken poet who may crack a joke that will take hold."

Mr. White is now engaged in cracking some remarkable jokes. Who knows? Perhaps they will take hold. If not, we have a choice before us. We may choose war, or slavery. Being a strong, courageous, energetic people we will choose war. But the odd part of it is that after we have done so, we will find that we have also chosen slavery.

Read Mr. White and see why.

6. *Argumentation*

EDITORS' NOTE

In 1942, Fortune published a series of essays which sought the answers to some of the most baffling questions of our time, including the reconciliation of religion, ethics, and science. One of these, the first of the trio which follows, was written by Willard L. Sperry (b. 1882), Dean of the Harvard Divinity School, a distinguished theologian widely known for his modern point of view.

The essays provoked a reply from Julian Huxley (b. 1887), Professor of Biology at Oxford and outstanding among scientists of today. In "The Biologist Looks at Man," he defends the scientific approach to the problems of human behavior. Dr. Huxley, brother of the novelist Aldous Huxley and grandson of the famous nineteenth-century Thomas Huxley, has written a number of books which will richly reward the thoughtful reader. Some of these are Essays of a Biologist (1923), The Stream of Life (1926), What Dare I Think? (1931), The Uniqueness of Man (1941), and Evolution (1942).

Another scientist whose interests have ranged far beyond the laboratory is Robert A. Millikan (b. 1868), Nobel Laureate and Chairman of the Executive Council of the California Institute of Technology. The extent and variety of his concern for the problems of mankind is reflected in such titles as Science and Life (1923), Evolution of Science and Religion (1927), Science and the New Civilization (1930), and Time, Matter, and Values (1932). "The Three Great Elements in Human Progress" is taken from the second of these.

It is suggested that the following essays by Sperry, Huxley, and Millikan be handled as a unit so that the reader may have one man's ideas fresh in his mind while he listens to the reasoning of a second or a third. Then, as in a public debate, the reader may weigh material and presentation in the light of his own critical reactions and act as final judge of the relative effectiveness of the various arguments. The student who is sufficiently stimulated may care to add, in classroom debate or written themes, his own attack on, or defense of, what seems to him to be the most persuasive point of view.

WILLARD L. SPERRY

OUR MORAL CHAOS

IN AUGUST, 1914, Lord Morley resigned as a Cabinet Member of the Asquith government and retired to private life. The prospect of a general European war offended his pacifist principles. But beyond all that, he felt that the liberalism to which he had given a long life of public service was passing away. In 1917 he published his *Recollections* and in the preface he said, "The world is traveling under formidable omens into a new era very unlike the times in which my lot was cast." And in 1914 a writer in the London *Nation* said: "To the second great home of Christendom the words of Jesus, spoken to redeem the world from just such a calamity as this, remain as though they had never been uttered."

The omens of the present hour are far more formidable than they were a quarter of a century ago, and the religious perplexity still persists. Why has religion been so ineffectual in our present distresses? Curiously enough, this question is not asked so often now as it was during World War I. Religion is not the only agent supposed to make for peace that has failed to fulfill its promises. Education, trade, international finance, rapid communication, art—all these were instruments of peace.

Broadly speaking, the initial contribution that religion always makes to culture, when it is true to its best self, is a discipline in humility. Self-righteousness is the sin for which religion knows no forgiveness. We do not have to be Jews or Christians to realize this. We have probably outgrown the idea of "holy wars," though a decently good conscience is still morally necessary to the waging of a war. Victorious self-righteousness is likely to make a bad peace. From a religious standpoint, it is almost impossible to see how any new world is ever to be set up if the self-righteousness of great states is allowed to persist undisciplined. The world of politics can hardly afford to say these things; the world of religion cannot afford not to say them.

We are told by conventional theologians that we are sinners and that the present war is the judgment of God visited upon us for our sins. In the broad sense of the word this is true, but every age has to give its own cutting edge to the sense of sin. Many years ago an American preacher went to Oxford to conduct a series of religious revivals. In one of his addresses he said, "In the blackness of the night my sins pass before me in a scarlet procession." One of the attending dons—William Temple, the Archbishop of Canterbury elect—said, "No, our sins are not scarlet; they are all gray, all gray." The sins

"Our Moral Chaos," by Dean Willard L. Sperry of the Harvard Divinity School. From *Fortune*, May, 1942. Copyright Time, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the author and publishers.

of Christendom have been since Versailles mainly sins of omission—"gray, all gray." We cannot get as emotionally excited about these sins as we can about our scarlet vices, but they are nonetheless serious.

We shall not be in any position to understand what religion may be expected to contribute to the future of our world until we inquire how it is that we came to the pass we are now in. It is no accident that we find ourselves religiously bewildered and for the time being almost frustrated.

THE INFECTION OF THE UNEASY SPIRIT

Our present position is analogous to that of the stranger lost while walking in a lonely part of Ireland. Meeting a peasant, he inquired the nearest road to Inishcrone. The directions and the way were long and complicated. Finally, the peasant looked at the stranger sadly and said: "If it was to Inishcrone myself I was goin', it's not from here I'd wish to be shtartin'." Nothing is more important at the moment than to attempt to understand how we came to be as we now are, religiously. And let it be said that our immediate place of "take off" is by no means ideal.

In every great religion we meet the familiar distinction between the contemplative life and the active life. It seems probable that this distinction is not an arbitrary one, unnecessarily invented by theology, but rather that it is a psychological datum. We all know the difference between introversion and extraversion and we all know into which one of the two camps temperamentally we fall.

The religion of the Western world in general, and of America in particular, has been activist. Our whole history inclines us to be more concerned with problems of conduct than with problems of faith. Hence the prominence of puritanism in our tradition and our inability to exorcise it, however much it may annoy us. It is entirely natural that our religious perplexities at the present moment should be practical rather than speculative, our problems moral rather than theological, and it is to the ethical aspects of the present situation that our minds first turn. The ethics of the modern world have been of two kinds: first, the conventional standards that we call Christian, matured out of the Bible tradition; second, a set of more recent ideals that have looked to science for their warrant, as for their ways and means. Both of these moral codes now seem to have let us down. They did not prevent World War I and have been even less able to prevent World War II. Why is this? As they are more or less independent of each other, these two ethics must be examined separately.

We have, then, the traditional moral ideals of the Christian religion. For the first three hundred years of its history, Christianity was more or less outlawed. It was suspected not so much of heresy, since Rome was tolerant on such matters, but of being a possible center of treason. During this time Christians never attempted to exercise the slightest direct influence on the great affairs of state. They thought of themselves as little "colonies of Heaven,"

living far in advance of their time and not concerned with the course of current events. The Roman Empire failed to exterminate Christianity by its prolonged series of persecutions. Finally, in the year 313, Constantine promulgated the Edict of Milan—often called the “Edict of Toleration”—which ended the persecutions and granted to Christians not merely official recognition but actual political responsibility.

From the beginning of the fourth century until our own latest time the Western world has always given nominal assent to the moral ideals of Christianity. As Professor Whitehead has observed: “Mankind’s most precious instrument of progress has been the impracticable ethics of Christianity. A standard has now been created, expressed in concrete illustrations, foolproof against perversions. This standard is a gauge by which to test the defects of human society. So long as the Galilean images are but the dreams of an unrealized world, so long they must spread the infection of an uneasy spirit.”

Now no one pretends that since the year 313 any considerable people or state in Christendom has realized the ethics of Jesus. A few saintly individuals and a few unworldly societies have come near it, but the truth is that, so far from “being perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect,” the great economic, industrial, and political groups in the Western world at their best have “followed Jesus afar off.”

Hence it has become the fashion to dismiss the identification of Christianity with Western culture as being premature if not presumptuous. We have been told to the point of tedium that so far as Christianity is concerned, the history of the last sixteen hundred years is ethically little more than a vast corporate hypocrisy. Cynics linger with pleasure over the crying contrast between the words that we read and hear and say in church on Sundays and the motives that guide our conduct the rest of the time.

The nineteenth century, at least in the English-speaking world, began to know a fresh “infection of the uneasy spirit.” Men became morally unhappy, not so much about the details of private conduct as about the premises of their business and political methods. Those of us who were trained for the liberal ministry at the beginning of this century were brought up in a world that was indifferent to the sort of issue that had bothered our predecessors: the nature of Biblical inspiration, miracles, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the like. We were very much concerned to find out how the ethical teaching of Jesus could be made to work better in the world in which we lived. We felt, moreover, that in a readiness to rest the case for Christianity upon the ethics of Jesus, we had dug in to a permanently impregnable theological position.

To many of us, therefore, the advent of the cult of anti-Christ was a cruel surprise and an all but mortal blow. If I may be forgiven a single word out of my own experience, I shall never forget the shock I had at Oxford at the hands of a don who in all good faith preached Nietzsche’s ethics as being the only possible “religion of all good men.” We theological students were racking our brains to try to discover how Christian moral ideals could be made more practicable, and this don simply did not bother himself with a frontal

attack on our Maginot Line. He merely cut around one end of it with the devastating proposition that, apart from not being practicable, the ethic of Christianity was not even desirable.

It is true that since the year 313 there have always existed vicious individuals to give the lie in their actions to accepted standards for Christian conduct. Nevertheless, for the ordering of man's on-going affairs in the Western world, there has always been this sense of at least a theoretical obligation to Christian moral ideals. The affairs even of war, as well as of peace, have been conducted within this framework. Perhaps the most striking instance of the success of Christianity's concern for peace was the "Truce of God," which obtained in Europe in the Middle Ages. This was an attempt on the part of the Church to prevent the evils of private warfare in the age of feudalism. We first hear of this truce in the year 990 in southern France, when the Church forbade men to fight during Lent and on certain other holy days. It reached its fullest realization toward the end of the twelfth century, when nine months of the year had been put out-of-bounds for warfare and there were only three left in which men might fight. Your cynic will say that so long as the principle of warfare goes unrebuked, all such mitigations of it are beside the mark. But looking over our era as a whole, one feels that the restraints that Christianity has imposed upon an evil such as war have been possible and up to a point effective precisely because inside Christendom all persons concerned—friend and foe alike—have admitted a feeling of common moral obligation to Christian ideals of mercy, forgiveness, charity, and the like. However hypocritical Christendom may have looked to the unsympathetic observer, it has had until this latest and most tragic hour an awareness of a body of moral standards and principles that were felt to be divine in their origin and universal in their applicability.

It is this loss of the ethical universals of historical Christianity that creates the grave moral perplexities of the present moment. The situation with which we are now confronted is absolutely novel. There are no historical precedents to suggest how we should act, and our sense of perplexity, to the point of defeatism, is due to the fact that in these matters of applied religion we are having to find our way into a wholly uncharted area of civilized life. Personally, I have no hesitation in saying that whatever the insincerities and hypocrisies of the days from Constantine to this latest hour of anti-Christ, those hypocrisies and insincerities always had the latent possibilities of some greater good for the world because they presupposed a set of moral universals that were a meeting ground for the minds of all the citizens of Christendom.

Quite apart from the moral system of traditional Christianity, there has grown up among us another serious ethic, which, on the whole, has now become more characteristic of the modern world at its best. This ethic is associated with science and the scientific method rather than with theology. That science is a method before it is a result of any kind goes without saying, and whatever unity science has in all its fields is vested in the constancy of this method.

If traditional religion and modern science have any real affinity, that affinity should be sought and found in an identity of their ethical manner of procedure. The great religions of the world have always said that self is the root of all evil, and in some form or other they have prescribed ways and means of overcoming self and achieving selflessness. This idea, with an elaboration of the disciplines by which the moral victory necessary to religion is to be won and the ideal achieved, was the central theme of all medieval mysticism. The great classic manual of that mysticism is the *Theologia Germanica*. The book is anonymous and that very fact is a hint of the selflessness it preaches. This nameless writer of the fourteenth century has no patience with those persons whom he calls "hirelings of God"—i.e., those whose zeal for religion is prompted by self-interest—and he talks constantly about the one religion that he thinks deserves the name, "the unmercenary love of God." It is fair to say that this is a very austere ideal for religion and that not many people realize it. Stubborn self-interest crops up in most of our religious practices; but it is also fair to say when we are talking about moral ideals that this whole doctrine of loving God for his own sake and not for what we can get out of him represents the ethical high-water mark of all the great world religions.

PURE SCIENCE AS A MORAL CODE

Now pure science sets before itself in nontheological terms exactly the same ideal and requires of itself precisely the same kind of stern moral discipline. Thomas Huxley, for example, who was a zealous preacher of what he felt to be the new religion of this later time, hammered away constantly on the thesis that if you were to be a scientist you had to put away your presuppositions and prejudices and get humbly down on your knees before the facts.

In the frantic haste of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to apply to the world of affairs the revolutionary discoveries of science, the moral ideals of pure science tended to get lost in the shuffle. As one brought up to think that the methods of medieval mysticism have their best statement in our own time in these later terms, I was reassured to read in a recent biography of Meister Eckhart, the father of all medieval mysticism: "What Eckhart demands is equivalent to what pure science demands of the laboratory investigator."

But how was pure science to take over the job of saving the world, at which in the eyes of so many thoughtful persons a generation or so ago religion had failed? The answer is written clearly and plainly in Karl Pearson's *Grammar of Science*, a theological treatise in the terms of this newer religion, published at the turn of the century. Pearson asks what the contribution of science to society is to be. He expresses a lack of concern for the practical application of scientific truths, although these may greatly add to the conveniences and comforts of life. Had he lived in our time he might have gone on to say that they have also incredibly facilitated the subtle forms of "man's inhumanity to man." But he would not have abandoned scientific research because of the

pains to which we are thus laid open, any more than he would pursue it for the sake of the creature comforts that it vouchsafes us. What really interested him was the prospect that, as man achieved dispassionateness in an inquiry into a limited set of facts, the mental and moral habits thus matured would automatically communicate themselves to the method of his dealings with all sorts and conditions of fact. That is, he trusted the man who had won the right to be called a "pure" physicist to extend the purity of his way of thinking about physics to all the rest of life. And he implied that if we could breed a world of men thus disciplined we should get rid of all the bigotries, jealousies, hatreds, and fears that have blotted the pages of the past. And we should then have a generation of fair-minded men able for the first time in history to know one another truly and to deal with one another justly. Science, in his own words, "ought to be one of the best training grounds for citizenship because it requires the formation of absolute judgments independent of the idiosyncrasies of the individual mind. The scientific man has, above all things, to strive at self-elimination in his judgments to provide an argument which is as true for each individual mind as for his own." Such then is the ethic of pure science, and it should be said that it represents a standard morally higher than the shrewd self-interest and bigoted self-confidence of many of the popular forms of historical religion. But the trouble seems to be that saintliness is as rare and as hard to achieve in a laboratory as in a church; modern science is just as liable to abuse and exploitation as traditional religion.

MORALITY ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH

Now it must be precisely because the findings of science are today being turned so largely to the destruction of life and of our institutions, rather than to their improvement, that many modern writers are recalling us from our preoccupation with the applied sciences to the gospel of Karl Pearson. The applied sciences have tended to destroy the theoretical catholicity of pure science. For the purposes of the continuing life of the plain man the sciences have become cruelly partisan and full of peril to him and his home. Our only hope is to recover the dispassionateness that the scientific method first proposed to us as our ideal and as, indeed, the means of our salvation. This is the religious truth of most of what Walter Lippmann has been trying to say since he wrote *A Preface to Morals*; it crops up in Virginia Woolf's last books; and Aldous Huxley has now become the most conspicuous spokesman for this idea. These writers may be using different words, but they are saying substantially what their scientific predecessors of fifty years ago said and what the mystics of the Middle Ages said. They tell us that whatever hope of peace the world may have, that hope must be vested hereafter in the moral power of the rank and file of men to achieve disinterestedness and dispassionateness of mind. Aldous Huxley has been using a new adjective of his own coining for the sake of whatever appeal is to be had from its freshness: the "non-attached" man. Men like Walter Lippmann and Aldous Huxley are abused by conventional church people for their indifference to the traditional forms of Jew-

ish and Christian faith and very often rapped on the knuckles for what is said to be their mental loose living. But my own belief is that, so far as "high religion" is concerned, they have hit on the one principle that morally matters more than all others, and that they are therefore among the most religious of our contemporaries.

Meanwhile the tragedy of it is that the hopeful gospel that a man like Karl Pearson preached for the saving of our world has for some strange reason proved as difficult to translate into general conduct as have the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. It is just about as hard to think dispassionately of a Himmler as it is to love him and forgive him. The austere moral ideals of pure science, which represent the affinities of science with religion and the contributions of science to religion, are as far off today as are the words of Jesus.

Our situation, therefore, is this: not only has Christendom lost the moral universals of historic religion, but we have failed to vindicate the one hopeful substitute for those universals that the modern mind proposed, namely, the ethic of pure science. Our world will never find its feet set on the way to peace until it recovers and reaffirms some such universals.

If there is any single conclusion to be drawn from our present dilemma it is that morality alone cannot make a religion, and that behind any ethical system that is to have a religious quality about it there must be an act of faith and a body of beliefs. The way we behave is determined by judgments of value that we pass on the world and on our own experience, and by some long-range guess as to the meaning of life. Those of us, therefore, who hoped forty years ago to keep the ethics of Jesus and to let his "religion" go were wrong. That apparently cannot be done. The reasons for behaving in the ways that Jesus proposes, and beyond that, the actual ability to behave thus, are derived from the belief that there is a God. It is said, "One is your Father and all ye are brethren." We tried to realize the second of these propositions in neglect of the first. It begins to look as though we should have to go back to the major premise if we expect the ethics of Jesus to work.

When we come to the hope of what Mr. Lippmann has called the "high religion" of the future—namely, the dispassionateness of the modern scientific mystic—we are at a loss to know what to say. It is rash of any theologian to venture into fields off which he is constantly warned by scientists. But to the outsider it rather looks as though preoccupation with very restricted areas of inquiry had cost the average scientist his sense of some kind of moral responsibility for the world as a whole. He has defended himself professionally by saying that only by shutting out all the world can he ever hope to find out the truth about the one little acre that he has fenced off as his professional preserve. He has probably been right, but the mental habit of confining his serious thinking to that one acre has made him unwilling to let his mind venture further afield. Scientific specialists set themselves, and require of one another, a very high standard. Sometimes I have asked a colleague to take the five-minute address at the morning prayers in our Harvard Chapel. To this

suggestion he is apt to reply: "I should never think of speaking in public on any matter on which I do not have exact knowledge. In the very nature of the case, religion is a subject where such knowledge cannot be had." These persons, however, are the accepted intellectual leaders of the modern world. They are looked up to by all of us to provide the truths by which we are to live—truths of nature and truths of history. Were we to be deprived of them we should in many ways miss them much more than we should miss the rank and file of the parish clergy. But all this while, either false modesty or a misconception of what Karl Pearson said about the purity of the scientific method prevents such persons from facing and hazarding answers to the half-dozen really important questions by which we are all confronted. What sort of creature is man? Is it all up with him when he dies? Is there any person or principle in the scheme of things outside ourselves that deserves the name of God? Are right and wrong merely a matter of local mores, varying with different cultures and climates, or is the distinction between right and wrong in principle the most important of the many differences that our world manifests? On these simple, elemental, absolutely imperative questions, which in the end determine the conduct of our lives, we get almost no help from run-of-the-mill scientists.

Either way the plain man comes off badly. If he is forced to admit, as was Job, on the basis of personal experience that many of the answers of orthodox theology to these questions are apparently wrong, he is not helped by being told when he turns to the professional scientist that one must not ask such questions and that there probably are no answers. When an occasional scientist does hazard a tentative personal answer to such questions, he is likely to be chided by his colleagues for being unprofessional and out of bounds, and is bidden go back to his gallipots. We might as well face the fact that given now a full, fair hundred years of the scientific method we cannot look to science for any near-at-hand vindication of a new and adequate set of moral universals that will save our world from going to hell unless science is willing to allow and encourage in the terms of its own thinking something like a religious faith, of which its ethic shall be the practical expression.

Finally, this loss of moral universals coincides in time with a century that has been markedly humanistic in its interests and has tended in its religious thought toward an unashamed humanism. Canon Barry, who has been for years at Westminster, recently said that humanism is the religion of 50 per cent of the intelligent persons in the modern world. We cannot afford to ignore this fact. Humanism is that kind of religion which proposes to concern itself solely with the affairs of man as man. So far as any "power not ourselves" may be involved, it is studiously agnostic. It does not deny that there may be a God, but it is determined not to run any risk of affirming that there is a God. In short, what we call "a spiritual universe" is, for religious purposes, put out of bounds and religion resolves itself into an attempt merely to conduct the domestic affairs of the race decently. Humanists come into being because conventional believers in God have in the past been so bigoted in con-

duct or so mistaken in theory that faith in God becomes impossible. But the fact that theologians have often been wrong and that churchmen have often been cruel does not close the issue. Patently, if there is a God, we need much more accurate knowledge of him and of his ways than we now have, but we shall not get ahead with an attempt to deal more adequately with the mystery of life by deliberately refusing to think about "God."

It would seem, therefore, that the world will never get its moral universals back until it again finds something like a religious faith. Of course man cannot compel himself to believe this or that article of faith by a fiat act of his will, but he can, at least, put himself in a believing attitude toward things. He can refuse to be contentedly agnostic. That, after all, is what has been wrong with modern man, not his agnosticism—for there is a strong strain of agnosticism in every religion—but his complacent contentment with that agnosticism. Job came to the point when he decided to give up bothering his head about the mystery of life and the world. But just when he had reached this comfortable solution of his difficulties, the Lord spoke to him out of a whirlwind and told him to stand on his feet and answer like a man. It rather seems as though out of the gales of modern history a voice were trying to say the same thing to us. There is little reason to suppose that World War II is about to yield us any fresh or radical religious insights. After the first World War there was, it is true, a vague but widespread feeling that we might be on the verge of some great religious revival or spiritual discovery. Nothing came of that presentiment. Wars test such religion as men have; they do not beget new religions.

Meanwhile, in the familiar religions we have at hand, there has been going on for the last ten years a kind of instinctive groping after the neglected ideas of "God," "heaven," and some "power-not-ourselves making for righteousness." This unorganized movement has had spokesmen all the way from Frank Buchman to Karl Barth, and is an attempt to correct an exaggerated "human class consciousness," by reference to the universe as a whole.

Unhappily, so far as many of us can see, this movement tends to be intellectually antiquarian, if not defeatist, in that it sounds a retreat to some safe period in the past. Protestants lapse back to the Reformation confessions of the sixteenth century; Catholics to the art and the theological systems of the thirteenth century. Why must we go back so far?

A WORLD OF PRACTICAL IDEALISTS

We should be more hopeful about the prospect for the near future if those who feel the need of vindicating their faith in a "spiritual universe" were not so far removed from us in their vernacular. The stained glass of Chartres is beautiful and the *Institutes* of Calvin structurally majestic, but these are not the media through which the modern mind expresses itself most directly.

Ethically our situation is even more difficult. All great world religions have, in their moral regimens, a strong strain of world denial or world renunciation.

This negative quality has been, as a matter of fact, the fulcrum by which they have proposed to move history. But the natural man tends to world affirmation. How to square these rival ethics is a stubborn riddle—perhaps an insoluble riddle. But it cannot be shirked.

All of us—manufacturers, industrialists, bankers, brokers, hand workers, professors, doctors, ministers—are involved together in the moral muddle and the moral tragedy of our time. Up to date we have really never taken time to try to know and understand one another's minds. We have gone our own ways, observing the distinctive ethics of our several vocations and letting it go at that. In the future we must make far more occasions to initiate one another into our several codes of business and professional ethics and find common ground on which to take our moral stand.

There is very little prospect that the utopia will come true in our lifetime. But that is no reason for not trying to make decent advance plans for it. Utopianism in the U.S. has hitherto been wholesale and rhetorical. Our margins of safety and comfort have been so great that we have not had to be too concrete. But the time is soon coming, if it has not already come, when those margins will have been exhausted and our idealism, both religious and political, will have to be much more specific in detail.

There is abroad today an awareness that, though the important changes for the better in the structure of society have been first conceived in the brains of solitary individuals, the prophetic ideas of such individuals have then to be worked out and actually tested in experiment in small "cells" or groups.

Anything that a thoughtful and serious man can do, whatever his profession or vocation, to create such "cells" in his community, is probably the most worth-while thing that he can be doing. But the persons concerned must be prepared together to give as much thought to their ethical projects as they now give to the details of their so-called, and often miscalled, "secular" vocations.

JULIAN HUXLEY

THE BIOLOGIST LOOKS AT MAN

THE WESTERN world today, as all previous contributors to this series have emphasized in one way or another, is caught in an apparent dilemma between two conflicting modes of thought. The one thinks in terms of absolutes—the absoluteness of truth, beauty, justice, goodness, themselves all deriving from an Absolute of absolutes, which is God. The

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natural world is complemented by the supernatural, the body by the soul, the temporal by the eternal. This view gives an essentially static world picture; the flux of events is merely change, in which the only progress is a spiritual one, toward the perfection of eternal values. Empiricism and the experimental method are alien to it; the absolute of Revelation and the absolute of pure Reason will between them answer all the questions that can be answered. Man's place in the universe is the place of an eternal soul, created by God, and working out its destiny in terms of eternal values.

The other is the scientific method. It subjects the conclusions of reason to the arbitrament of hard fact to build an increasing body of tested knowledge. It refuses to ask questions that cannot be answered, and rejects such answers as cannot be provided except by Revelation. It discovers the relatedness of all things in the universe—of the motion of the moon to the influence of earth and sun, of the nature of the organism to its environment, of human civilization to the conditions under which it is made. It introduces history into everything. Stars and scenery have their history, alike with plant species or human institutions, and nothing is intelligible without some knowledge of its past. As Whitehead has said, each event is the reflection or effect of every other event, past as well as present. It rejects dualism. The supernatural is in part the region of the natural that has not yet been understood, in part an invention of human fantasy, in part the unknowable. Body and soul are not separate entities, but two aspects of one organization, and Man is that portion of the universal world stuff that has evolved until it is capable of rational and purposeful values. His place in the universe is to continue that evolution and to realize those values.

These two ways of approaching and thinking about the universe are irreconcilable—as irreconcilable as is magic with scientific agriculture, witch doctoring with preventive medicine, or number mysticism with higher mathematics. Because our thinking still contains elements from both, it and we are confused.

This is not the view of the previous contributors to this series. In different ways they have maintained that the two systems of thought are not mutually exclusive but complementary. Though they all admit that the scientific or relativist approach is adequate and indeed essential so far as it goes, they agree in asserting that it cannot go all the way—that it is necessarily partial and needs to be supplemented by some elements derived from the alternative way of thinking. Professor Sperry says that we must supplement science with moral universals. Professor Maritain frankly finds the only chance of regeneration in a philosophy based on Christian theology. Professor Montague, more vaguely, postulates a tendency toward ideal good operating in nature—an omnipresent but not omnipotent Holy Spirit, strongly reminiscent of Matthew Arnold's "something, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." Professor Montague calls this a god, without the capital letter. Professor Hocking is more definite: for him the truth of science needs to be supplemented by another

truth: that the world is our absolute, in that it has a unity and a purpose, and is (if I understand him) the conscious purpose of God.

To me, this mixing of two totally different kinds of thinking can only lead to confusion. When men assert that the scientific approach is incomplete, it is because they have not been willing to follow it to its final conclusion, or because they are mistaking an early stage in its growth for full development.

Science inevitably began by trying its hand on the simpler phenomena of nature. Its first triumphs were in mechanics, including the spectacular celestial mechanics of Newton. It next proceeded to simple physics, like the gas laws or the decomposition of white light. Chemistry, even elementary chemistry, did not take real shape till a century later. The life sciences developed later than those of lifeless matter, for the sufficing reason that they deal with more complex phenomena. Physiology had to wait on physics and chemistry before it could become scientific. The central fact of biology, evolution, was not established until modern science had been in existence for over two hundred years; the mysteries of heredity did not become clear until well on in the present century. In the same way the science of mind developed later than biological science. What Newton was for mechanics and physics, and Darwin for biology, Freud was for psychology—the originator of a new and illuminating way of thinking about the subject matter of his science.

It is of some significance that none of the previous writers in this series have even mentioned Freud or taken the findings of modern psychology into consideration at all—not excluding Professor Montague, though he essays a psychological analysis of the development of conscience in the growing child.

This is one of the reasons for their claim that the scientific approach is insufficient. Of course it is insufficient if you leave out the latest stage of its development. You might just as well leave out physiology and evolution and then claim that the scientific approach as represented by classical physics and chemistry was insufficient. No, the only cure for the insufficiency of science is more science. The scientific approach, empirical and where possible experimental, refusing the absolute for the relative, and rejecting the deductions of pure reason except when based upon the inductions of raw fact, cannot be rejected as insufficient until it has been completely tried out on the analysis of human mind and human affairs as well as on that of nonliving matter. In these less complex fields its application has already revolutionized our way of thinking about the universe (not to mention producing the most spectacular practical results): there is no reason why it should not continue to do so as it consolidates its hold on the new areas it is now invading. Let us not forget that scientific method is extremely young: what are three centuries compared to the millenniums of civilization, the million years of man, or the thousand million years of evolving life?

Scientific method today has reached about as far in its understanding of human mind as it had in the understanding of electricity by the time of Galvani and Ampère. The Faradays and Clerk Maxwells of psychology are still to come; new tools of investigation, we can be sure, are still to be discovered

before we can penetrate much further, just as the invention of the telescope and calculus were necessary precursors of Newton's great generalizations in mechanics.

However, even with the progress that science has already made, it is possible to give a reasonably coherent world picture based on the scientific approach; and this contains elements of the greatest importance to our philosophy and to our practical outlook. One is that the universe is not dualistic but monistic; another is the incorporation of values within the scientific picture, and a reconciliation of their absoluteness in principle with their relativity in practice; a third is the real existence of progress in evolution; a fourth is the complete and sole responsibility of man for achieving any further progress that may be made on this planet, and the falsity of all his attempts to shift any of the burden of his responsibilities onto the shoulders of outside powers; and a fifth is the establishment of the developed human personality as the highest product of the universe (or at least the highest product of which we have any knowledge), with all the implications of this fact for our social and political philosophy.

DARWIN IS VINDICATED

Let me take these points one by one, to show their interconnection. The way of advance for truth is in general the same as the way of advance for existing life: of two alternatives, one dies out, not because the other destroys it directly, but because it is less fitted to survive. Even after Copernicus, the doctrine that the sun goes round the earth could still be logically maintained. But it demanded enormous complexity of epicycle upon epicycle. The rival theory that the earth goes round the sun was far simpler and more satisfying; in the climate provided by developing civilization it survived, the other simply died out of human thinking.

The monistic, unitary view of the universe will survive for the same kind of reason. Our scientific knowledge now permits us to assert definitely that there is no break in the continuity of phenomena. All matter, living or lifeless, is composed of the same units—all the millions of different lifeless substances, as well as of living species, are made of different combinations of the chemical elements, and these in turn of different combinations of still more elementary particles (or "wavicles"). In reproduction, there is no moment at which life enters; there is continuity of life between the offspring and its parent or parents. The offspring is merely a detached portion of the parental living substance. Nowhere in the transformation of microscopic ovum to adult human being is there a break at which one can say "here mind appears," or "there personality enters"; development is continuous.

It is the same with the vast process of organic evolution. Here too gradualness and continuity reign; there is no moment at which we can say that reptile ends or bird begins, no definite demarcation between man and not-man, no sharp line at which we must or indeed could postulate the sudden injection of thought or soul into evolving life. The ideas of evolution by brusque mutations of large extent have disappeared: with the new knowledge of the last

twenty years the overwhelming consensus of biology has returned to support Darwin's original view of the extreme gradualness of all evolutionary change.

Nor is there the least reason for postulating any sudden injection of life into our world. Living matter is composed of the same elements as nonliving, and no trace of any special "vital energy" has been detected. The scientific view is that under the conditions obtaining during the early history of the earth, the particular combination of matter that we call life was formed in the cosmic test tube, and once formed could maintain itself by its power of self-reproduction. Any other hypothesis is less simple: the onus of proof falls on those who would maintain it.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

What then becomes of the apparent dualism between matter and spirit? Many philosophers, including Professor Montague, persist in affirming that the only alternative is materialism, according to which mind is "a function of the body (matter), and depends upon it completely." This is an easy thesis to demolish; and having demolished it, they can conclude that the dualistic alternative is true. The real alternative to dualism they have conveniently omitted to mention.

The only logical alternative to dualism is monism—that matter and mind are two aspects of one reality, that there exists one world stuff, which reveals material or mental properties according to the point of view. Looked at from the outside, the world stuff has nothing but material properties; its operations appear as mind only to itself, from within.¹ The first objection to this, that we have experience of the minds of other people, disappears when we remember that this experience is not direct, as is the experience of our own psychic processes, but indirect, deduced from other people's behavior (including expression and verbal behavior), combined with our knowledge of our own minds. The second objection, that a dead man still has the same body as a live one, and therefore differs by the loss of a living soul, is still more easily disposed of. A dead body is *not* the same as a living body: the chemical conditions in it—for instance the presence of enough oxygen for the functioning of the tissues—are different. If you substitute oil for acid in the battery of your automobile, no current will pass. The interpretation of a primitive savage might well be that the living soul of the contraption had fled. But we know that the conditions have been altered: restore the old conditions and the battery becomes "live" again. It is the same with the body. The physicochemical conditions of the dead body are different from those of the living body: if you could restore the conditions found in the living body, the dead body would live again. This has been done by artificially restarting the heart; but owing to the rapidity with which irreversible changes take place in dying cells, this has so far proved possible only within a very short time after death (or, if you prefer, what otherwise would have been death) has occurred.

¹ Mind is used here broadly, to denote all psychical activity and experience, conscious or sub-conscious, sensory, emotional, cognitive and conative.

But if the world stuff is both matter and mind in one; if there is no break in continuity between the thinking, feeling adult human being and the inert ovum from which he developed; no break in continuity between man and his remote pre-amoebic ancestor; no break in continuity between life and not-life—why then mind or something of the same nature as mind must exist throughout the entire universe. This is, I believe, the truth. We may never be able to prove it, but it is the most economical hypothesis: it fits the facts much more simply than does any dualistic theory, whether a universal dualism or one that assumes that mind is suddenly introduced into existing matter at a certain stage, and very much more simply than one-sided idealism (in the metaphysical sense) or one-sided materialism.

THE SIGNIFICANT ELECTRIC EEL

The notion that there is something of the same nature as human mind in lifeless matter at first sight appears incredible or ridiculous. Let us, however, illustrate its possibility by considering certain well-established biological facts concerning electricity. Apart from lightning, the only powerful electric phenomena known before the late eighteenth century were the electric shocks produced by the electric eel, the electric ray, and one or two other kinds of fish. The production of electricity by life might justly have appeared as something rare and sporadic. However, as physiology progressed, it was found that electric currents pass when a nerve is stimulated, when a muscle contracts, when a gland secretes; in fact we know that all vital activities, of whatever kind, from conscious thought to the fertilization of the egg, are accompanied by some electrical activity. The electrical charges are extremely minute and can be detected only by the most refined instruments; but they are always there. They are there because what we call electricity is one aspect of all matter (indeed, when we get down to the ultimate units of matter, such as electrons, their electric properties seem to be the most essential).

In the electric eel, certain muscles have been modified so that though they have lost their original function of contraction, their electric discharges are accumulated as in a galvanic pile, and the total voltage and current are quite respectable. Whereas in the great majority of cases the electrical properties of living matter play no special part in the life of the animal, they have become the specific function of the eel's electric organs: an accident of nature has become biologically significant.

One may suggest that the same sort of thing has happened with mind. All the activities of the world stuff are accompanied by mental as well as by material happenings; in most cases, however, the mental happenings are at such a low level of intensity that we cannot detect them; we may perhaps call them "psychoid" happenings, to emphasize their difference in intensity and quality from our own psychical or mental activities. In those organs that we call brains, however, the psychoid activities are, in some way, made to reinforce each other until, as is clearly the case in higher animals, they reach a high level

of intensity; and they are the dominant and specific function of the brain of man. Until we learn to detect psychoid activities of low intensity, as we have learned to do with electrical happenings, we cannot prove this. But already it has become the simplest hypothesis that will fit the facts of developmental and evolutionary continuity.

In evolution, science has not merely revealed the bridge that provides continuity between man and lifeless matter, but has also discovered what is perhaps the most important single biological fact yet known—the fact of evolutionary progress. A great deal of evolution is mere diversification. New species constantly arise, adapted to slightly different conditions, or produced by the biological accidents of isolation or hybridization. Through this frill of diversity, however, there can be perceived a series of long-range trends, whose course runs for millions or tens of millions of years. The great majority of these trends are specializations. They fit the existing type more closely to one mode of life, and in so doing cut it off from success in others. In the evolution of higher mammals, for instance, one line specialized as predators, and became the carnivores; another specialized in chewing and digesting foliage and herbage, and usually in swift running, to become the ungulates; a third in flying—the bats; a fourth in marine life—the whales and porpoises; and so on. It is a universal rule that one-sided specializations eventually come to a dead end. There is a point beyond which natural selection cannot push them. It is impossible to be more perfectly streamlined than a dolphin; when the horse stock had reduced its digits to one, it could go no further; elephants are close to the limit of weight that is possible for an efficient land animal. When a specialization has reached its biomechanical limit, it remains unchanged—unless new competition causes it to become extinct. Thus most mammals have not evolved in any important way for ten or twenty million years, birds not for twenty or twenty-five million, ants not for thirty million.

But besides these lines of specialization we find a few lines whose trend is toward all-round instead of one-sided improvement; and these are not doomed to come to a stop. It is this all-round and potentially unlimited advance that may legitimately be called progress. It is concrete and measurable. It consists in an increased control by life over its environment, an increased independence to the changes of that environment, an increase of knowledge, of harmonious complexity and self-regulation.

But it is not universal or inevitable. It occurs in a few only out of the tens of thousands of evolving types. It reveals itself not in any advance of life as a whole, but in a raising of the level reached by the type that is biologically dominant at any given time. The union of many cells to form a single individual was evolutionary progress. So was the formation of a central nervous system, of a head, of a blood circulation, of elaborate sense organs. Later on, emergence onto land, with its consequent increase of self-regulation, marked a step in progress; so did the self-regulation of temperature that we call warm blood, the nourishment of the mammalian young by its mother, and the steady development of intelligence and the power to profit by experience in the mam-

malian stock. The evolution by man of conceptual thought, of conscious reason and purpose, finally produced a dominant type with radically new biological characteristics.

EVOLUTION OF PERSONALITY

To assert that man is the highest product of evolution to date is a statement of simple biological fact. There are, however, some other points concerning man's position relative to evolutionary progress that are less obvious. First is the curious fact that the human species is now the sole repository of any possible future progress for life. When multicellular animals first appeared, they all had reached a new level of progress: later, some cut themselves off from further advance by entering on blind alleys, such as the fixed, vegetative existence of the polyps and corals or the headlessness and radial symmetry of the starfish and other echinoderms. The process of restriction has now gone so far that all future progress hangs on human germ plasm. It is a biological impossibility for any other line of life to progress into a new dominant type—not the ant, the rat, nor the ape.

Second, with the evolution of man, the character of progress becomes altered. With human consciousness, values and ideals appeared on earth for the first time. The criteria of further progress must include the degree to which those ideal values are satisfied. The quest for truth and knowledge, virtue, beauty and esthetic expression, and its satisfaction through the channels of science and philosophy, mysticism and morality, literature and the arts, becomes one of the modes or avenues of evolutionary progress. A tendency in this direction had been manifested earlier in evolution. On the whole, biological progress in its later stages had been more concerned with independence of the environment than with control over it. The introduction of ideal values makes it possible for this tendency to go further. We may anticipate that in the remote future human control over the environment will become increasingly devoted to securing greater independence, greater freedom from material exigencies, and both of them together to securing a greater degree of self-realization and of the satisfaction of human values.

It is also important to note that biological progress demands no special agency. In other words, it does not require the intervention of a conscious Divine purpose, nor the operation of some mysterious life force or *élan vital*: like most other facts of evolution, it is the automatic result of the blind forces of reproduction, variation, and differential survival. Newton's great generalization of gravitational attraction made it possible and indeed necessary to dispense with the idea of God guiding the stars in their courses; Darwin's equally great generalization of natural selection made it possible and necessary to dispense with the idea of God guiding the evolutionary courses of life. Finally, the generalizations of modern psychology and comparative religion make it possible, and necessary, to dispense with the idea of God guiding the evolutionary courses of the human species, through inspiration or other form of supernatural direction.

The present culmination of the thousand-million-year sweep of biological progress is the human species, with all its defects and mistakes. Thus the highest and richest product of the cosmic process (or, again, the highest of which we have any knowledge) is the developed human personality. It is among individual men and women that we must search for our exemplars.

REPRESSION IS NORMAL

A corollary of the facts of evolutionary progress is that man must not attempt to put off any of his burden of responsibility onto the shoulders of outside powers, whether these be conceived as magic or necessity, as life force or as God. Man stands alone as the agent of his fate and the trustee of progress for life. To accept his responsibility consciously is itself an important step toward more rapid progress. Here is a field where a philosophy based on the scientific outlook is of the utmost practical importance.

But the problem that most perplexes our present age remains the question of moral certitude. As Dean Sperry says, it is the loss of the "ethical universals," with which Christianity has equipped Western civilization, that creates the "grave moral perplexities" of the present. This is where modern psychology enters the picture. For a justification of our moral code we no longer have to have recourse to theological revelation, or to a metaphysical Absolute; Freud in combination with Darwin suffice to give us our philosophic vision. The great contribution of Freud was the discovery of the unconscious mind. What matter if logicians assert that the phrase is a contradiction in terms? It is now firmly established that through the process known as repression, desires and ideas, emotions and purposes, can be forced out of consciousness, or at least out of contact with the main organization of consciousness that we call the self or ego. They are then "in the unconscious," but in the unconscious they continue operating just as if they were ordinary processes of the mind, and they are still able to influence the conscious life of the ego in the most varied ways.

Repression is the banishment from consciousness of desires and ideas that produce otherwise intolerable conflict. It is a special form of what psychologists and neurologists call inhibition. The repressed ideas are so intolerable that consciousness will not even recognize their existence or examine them rationally; yet they are so powerful that they distort consciousness itself. They may manage to enter, in suitably disguised forms, into the very forces of the mind that aid in their repression, and lead to a neurotic conflict that is indefinitely prolonged. They may emerge under the guise of perversions, sublimations, compulsions, or mere oddities of behavior. Most important for our purpose, since the conflict is never faced in the light of conscious reason, it has to be resolved by irrational methods; emotional force must be met by emotional force. This is accomplished by the development of what psychoanalysts call the superego, a mental construction embodying the repressive forces, and also the feelings of guilt engendered by the conflict. From another angle, the superego may be looked on as the injection of external authority into the in-

fant's developing personality. There it takes root under the form of a sense of moral compulsion. To complete the story, we may add that it is often re-projected outward, so to speak, in the form of a jealous God, an absolute moral law, an infallible Führer, or some other externalization.

The superego is a rationalization of the conflict between primitive unregulated impulse and the deep infantile need for dependence. It can be equated with certain aspects of conscience; it gives the compulsive force to taboos, both ritual and ethical; it provides morality with its irrational certitudes, and sometimes with an unpardoning ruthlessness; primitively, its strength is bound up with cruelty, and this issues in the idea of punishment for sin, including expiatory self-torture. It is, in fact, the nonrational and emotional element in ethics.

It has not, I think, been sufficiently recognized that repression is normal in man. Man is the only organism whose mind is so constructed that conflict is inevitable. The young child is subjected to powerful conflicts even before it can talk and reason, and long before it has adequate experience to resolve a conflict rationally. Repression is thus an adaptation to conflict, especially to early conflict; in its absence, the degree of assurance necessary for action and adjustment would be impossible.

Undoubtedly the picture of human psychology given by psychoanalysis and other modern dynamic theories is crude and incomplete, but equally undoubtedly it is a first approximation to the truth. It is as great an improvement over older theories as was mid-nineteenth-century physiology, for all its crudity, over the medieval theory of humors, or Dalton's atomic theory of chemistry, for all its incompleteness, over alchemy.

Its importance for philosophy, and especially for ethics, is enormous, for it enables us to understand how ethical and other values can be absolute in principle while remaining obstinately relative in practice; and in conjunction with our knowledge of evolution, it enables us to reconcile absolutism and relativism by uniting them in the concept of right direction.

Values appear absolute for two reasons. The first is a result of the structure of language. The very existence of general and abstract terms like *true* and *truth* implies that an absolute Truth exists, and also that there is always an absolute difference between truth and falsehood. This, however, is not the case. Truth is only absolute when it deals with the incomplete, such as the abstractions from reality that form the basis of mathematics. The absolute difference between truth and falsehood only applies in a limited number of situations. The atomic theory of Dalton was true in giving a reasonably accurate picture of chemical fact. It was incorrect in ascribing indivisibility to atoms; but this does not make it false, only incomplete. The fact remains, however, that man's capacity for conceptual thought makes it more difficult for him to think in relative terms. The general and the abstract tend, almost automatically, to become invested with the intellectual halo of the absolute. The lesson of science is that this tendency should be resisted. Paradoxically, we find that we are enabled to accumulate a more complete and a more certain store of knowl-

edge when, as in science, we reject the possibility of absolute completeness or absolute certainty, and are prepared to abandon our dearest theories in the face of new facts.

What holds for truth holds also for beauty and goodness. But in the case of goodness in particular, this predisposition to translate the particular into the general, the general into the abstract, and the abstract into the absolute, is reinforced by another effect—the sense of emotional certitude which in its origin is to be traced to the mental mechanisms growing out of the need for infantile repression. Thanks to repression, it is natural for us not only to think in absolute terms, but to feel in them. The inhibiting influences of the superego tend to produce an intolerant assurance of being right, because only through such an assurance could they have succeeded in repressing their opponents into the unconscious. In so far as they succeed, they acquire emotional certitude; and that emotional certitude, given the construction of the human mind, inevitably tends to rationalize itself by claiming absolute value.

THE ETHICAL CONFLICT

When, however, we come to practice, we find ourselves plunged back into the confusion of the relative. For instance, granted that we win this war, what will be the right way of treating Germany? The absolute principle of justice makes us feel the demand that crime should be punished. But, applied to the Germans, does this mean punishing Hitler, the Nazi leaders, all those directly guilty of cruelty and injustice, or the whole German people? Furthermore, the absolute principle of justice conflicts with the equally absolute principles of mercy and love. And finally these absolute emotional principles come in conflict with the frankly utilitarian principles like the greatest good of the greatest number, whose application must be decided rationally and relatively to circumstances. Clearly one course will prove to be more right than another; but in deciding which to adopt, the so-called absolute ethical and moral principles will only take us part way.

The same is true of the individual. As he grows up, he finds that his apparently absolute ethical values constantly need the assistance of relativism, in the shape of rational judgment in the light of experience, if they are to be applicable to particular situations. It is wrong to lie; but we all know circumstances where it is more wrong to tell the truth. It is wrong to take life; but it needs rational judgment to decide whether this applies to war, to certain cases of suicide and abortion, to euthanasia, to birth control.

In fact, one of the chief tasks before each individual is to make a rational and relative adjustment of the apparent absolute of his primitive ethics, derived from infantile repression, to the practical realities of life. To accomplish this, it may even be necessary that the original structure of repressed and repressing forces be destroyed, whether by some violent emotional or religious experience, or by the deliberate "mental operation" of psychoanalysis or other form of psychotherapy.

Looked at from the evolutionary point of view, both the individual ethical

values of the superego and the collective ones of the current system of religion and morality are adaptations enabling human life to carry on without too great a degree of incertitude and inner conflict. This means that they must have some degree of external relevance to the environment in which they arise, and are bound to change as it changes. For instance, so long as infectious disease was supposed to be a punishment for sin, it was possible to regard sacrifice to the gods as an ethical duty in times of pestilence. Today our modern knowledge makes it ethical for us to compel the forcible isolation of sufferers from such diseases. Again, under the new conditions of Hitler's aggression and hateful methods of warfare, many convinced pacifists have changed their strong ethical belief that war is always wrong.

In the light of these facts, the dilemma of ethics begins to look rather different. The absoluteness of ethical values turns out to be apparent only, springing partly from the feeling of certitude or even compulsion associated with repression, partly from man's natural yearning for certitude, partly from his language habits. On the other hand, the inconstancy of ethical values revealed by history and anthropology, which is at first so confusing and distressing, turns out not to be wholly at random. Ethics is related, though incompletely and indirectly, to the solid facts of man's environment: it is a social adaptation.

The task before us, as ethical beings, now begins to take shape. It is to preserve the force of ethical conviction that springs up naturally out of infantile dependence and the need for inhibition and repression in early life, but to see that it is applied, under the correctives of reason and experience, to provide the most efficient and the most desirable moral framework for living. This will undoubtedly mean radical changes in the early upbringing of children, as well as in the methods of education and in accepted religions and codes of ethics. For instance, sociologists are beginning to realize that existing ethico-religious systems often contain a large element of psychological compensation: they compensate for the miseries of this world with the bliss of a world to come, they compensate for ignorance of fact with certitude of feeling, they compensate for actual imperfections of ethical practice by setting up impossible ethical ideals. This is not merely hypocrisy; it is a primitive method of self-defense against a hard and difficult reality.

Again, it is becoming clear that harshness of punishment in early life tends to the development of a morally vindictive superego: other methods are required for the development of a character where the aggressive and sadistic impulses are kept subordinate. The most difficult lesson to learn is that irrational and intolerant certitude is undesirable. We have seen how this applies to truth: the lesson is difficult there also, but science has learned it. It will be even more difficult to learn in ethics: but it must be learned if we are to emerge from psychological barbarism. To cling to certitude is to prolong an infantile reaction beyond the period when it is necessary. To become truly adult, we must learn to bear the burden of incertitude.

Another serious difficulty is how to arouse strong ethical feeling on important moral issues. It is easy to feel strongly about sexual behavior, because almost inevitably certain components of the sexual impulse become repressed

in early life—so easy, in fact, that “morality” is often used to mean sexual morality alone. But it is much harder to feel strongly about social problems such as malnutrition or unemployment because the connection with the repressive mechanism is not so automatic. Through education and general social attitude such problems can be linked with a strong feeling about the wrongness of cruelty, which in its turn is readily generated by the repression of the aggressive impulses. In addition, of course, the child’s natural sense of sympathy can be appealed to and strengthened, and primitive feelings of aggression can be sublimated and canalized into constructive activities. But any strong emotional sense of absolute wrongness can only be introduced by utilizing the fact of repression, with its accompanying load of guilt. Society must make rational use of an irrational mechanism to create the system of values it wants.

MAN IS THE MEASURE OF PROGRESS

I would draw some such general and final conclusion as this. A scientifically based philosophy enables us in the first place to cease tormenting ourselves with questions that ought not to be asked because they cannot be answered—such as questions about a First Cause, or Creation, or Ultimate Reality. Secondly, it encourages us to think in terms of right direction and optimum speed in place of complete but static solutions. At the present moment, for instance, it is much more essential to know that we are moving with reasonable speed toward certain general types of supernational cooperation than to nail some elaborate blueprint of international organization to our masthead. Thirdly, it is capable of giving man a much truer picture of his nature and his place in the universe than any other philosophic approach. Man is now the dominant biological type, and the developed human individual the highest product of the cosmic process that we know. That is a proud piece of knowledge. It is tempered by the reflection that very few human individuals realize a fraction of their possibilities, and that in a large proportion, passive or active evil predominates. But the knowledge has important practical bearings. Once we realize that the development of individuals is the ultimate yardstick by which to measure human progress, we can see more clearly how to formulate our war aims.

The fact that we, all the human beings now in existence, are the exclusive trustees for carrying any further the progress already achieved by life is a responsibility which, if sobering, is also inspiring; as is the fact that we have no longer either the intellectual or the moral right to shift any of this responsibility from our own shoulders to those of God or any other outside power. Indeed, the problem that appears to be the most perplexing and distressing turns out, in the light of a thoroughgoing scientific approach, to be full of encouragement. I mean the problem of ethical and other values. We have been accustomed to think of these as a scaffolding for our morals, conveniently run up for us by some outside agency. Now that this is no longer possible, we feel bewildered, unable to conceive of any firm moral construction in which we can abide. The truth, however, as shown by the extension

of scientific method into individual and social psychology, is that we create our own values. Some we generate consciously; some subconsciously; and some only indirectly, through the structure of the societies in which we live. Through a fuller comprehension of these mechanisms we shall be able to guide and accelerate this process of value creation, which is not only essential for our individual lives but basic to the achieving of true evolutionary progress in the future.

ROBERT A. MILLIKAN

THREE GREAT ELEMENTS IN HUMAN PROGRESS

THERE are three ideas which seem to me to stand out above all others in the influence they have exerted and are destined to exert upon the development of the human race. They have appeared at widely separated epochs because they correspond to different stages in the growth of man's knowledge of himself and of his world. Each of these ideas can undoubtedly be traced back until its origins become lost in the dim mists of prehistoric times, for the sage and the prophet, the thinker and the dreamer, have probably existed since the days of the caveman, and the first has always seen, the second felt, truth to which his times were wholly unresponsive. But it is a general rule that *when the times are ripe* an idea that may have been adumbrated in individual minds millenniums earlier begins to work its way into the consciousness of the race as a whole, and from that time on exerts a powerful influence upon the springs of human progress. In this sense, these three ideas may be called discoveries and times may be set at which they begin to appear. The first of these, and the most important of the three, is the gift of religion to the race; the other two sprang from the womb of science. They are

1. The idea of the Golden Rule;
2. The idea of natural law;
3. The idea of age-long growth, or evolution.

The first idea, namely, that one's own happiness, one's own most permanent satisfactions are to be found through trying to forget oneself and seeking, instead, the common good, this altruistic ideal is so contrary to the immediate promptings of the animal within us that it is not strange that it found little place in the thinking or acting of the ancient world, nor for that matter, in spite of the professions of Christianity, in the acting of the modern world either. There will be common consent, however, that the greatest, most con-

"Three Great Elements in Human Progress," from *Science and the New Civilization* by Robert A. Millikan. Copyright, 1930, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

sistent, most influential proponent of this idea who has ever lived was Jesus of Nazareth. Buddha, Confucius, Socrates, all had now and then given voice to it, but Jesus made it the sum and substance of his whole philosophy of life. When he said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you even so do ye also unto them, *for this is the law and the prophets*," I take it that he meant by that last phrase that this precept epitomized in his mind all that had been commanded and foretold—that it embodied the summation of duty and of aspiration.

Now when the life and teachings of Jesus became the basis of the religion of the whole western world, an event of stupendous importance for the destinies of mankind had certainly taken place, for a new set of ideals had been definitely and officially adopted by a very considerable fraction of the human race, a fraction which will be universally recognized to have held within it no small portion of the world's human energies and progressive capacities, and which has actually been to no small degree determinative of the direction of human progress.

The significance of this event is completely independent even of the historicity of Jesus. The service of the Christian religion, my own faith in essential Christianity would not be diminished one iota if it should in some way be discovered that no such individual as Jesus ever existed. If the ideas and ideals for which he stood sprang up spontaneously in the minds of men without the stimulus of a single great character, the result would be even more wonderful and more inspiring than it is now, for it would mean that the spirit of Jesus actually is more widely spread throughout the world than we realize. In making this statement, I am endeavoring to say just as positively and emphatically as I can, that the credentials of Jesus are found wholly in his teachings and in his character as recorded by his teachings, and not at all in any real or alleged historical events. And in making that affirmation, let me also emphasize the fact that I am only paraphrasing Jesus' own words when he refused to let his disciples rest his credentials upon a sign.

My conception then of the essentials of religion, at least of the Christian religion, and no other need here be considered, is that those essentials consist in just two things: first, in inspiring mankind with the Christlike, *i. e.*, the altruistic *ideal*, and that means specifically, *concern for the common good* as contrasted with one's own individual impulses and interests, wherever in one's own judgment the two come into conflict; and second, inspiring mankind to *do*, rather than merely to think about, its duty, the definition of duty for each individual being what he himself conceives to be for the common good. In three words, I conceive the essential task of religion to be "to develop the consciences, the ideals and the aspirations of mankind."

It is very important to notice that in the definitions I have given duty has nothing to do with what somebody else conceives to be for the common good, *i. e.*, with morality in the derivative sense of the mores of a people. Endless confusion and an appalling amount of futility gets into popular discussion merely because of a failure to differentiate between these two conceptions. As I shall use the words, then, moral and immoral, or moral right and wrong,

are purely subjective terms. The question of what actually is for the common good is the whole stupendous problem of science in the broad sense of that term, *i. e.*, of knowledge, and has nothing to do with religion or with morals as I am using these words. There are only two kinds of immoral conduct. The first is due to indifference, thoughtlessness, failure to reflect upon what is for the common good, in other words, careless, impulsive, unreflective living on the part of people who know that they ought at least to try to think things through. I suspect that ninety-nine per cent of all immorality is of this type and that this furnishes the *chief reason for religious effort and the chief field for religious activity*. For both example and precept unquestionably have the power to increase the relatively small fraction of the population that attempts to be reflectively moral. The second type of immorality is represented by "the unpardonable sin" of which Jesus spoke, *viz.*, deliberate refusal, after reflection, to follow the light when seen.

Thus far, I have been dealing only with what seem to me to be obvious facts, mere platitudes, if you will, for the sake of not being misunderstood when I speak about the essentials of religion. I am not at this moment concerned with how far the *practice* of religion has at times fallen short of the ideals stated in the foregoing essentials. I am now merely reaffirming the belief with which I began, and which I suspect that, after the foregoing explanations, not many will question, though I know there are some who will, that the discovery of the foregoing ideals, and their official adoption as the basis of the religion of the Western World has within the past two thousand years exercised a stupendous influence upon the destinies of the race.

But I am going to go farther and to express some convictions about the relation of those ideals not only to the past but, also, to the present and to the future. I am going to affirm that those ideals are the most potent and significant element in the religion of the Western World today. It is true that many individual western religions contain some elements in addition to these, some of them good, some harmless, some bad, and that the good and the bad are so mixed in some of them that it is not always easy, even from my own point of view, to determine whether a given branch of religion is worthwhile or not. Nevertheless, looking at western religion as a whole, the following facts seem to me obvious and very significant.

First, that if the basis of western religion is to be found in the element that is common to all its branches, then the one indispensable element in it now is just that element that formed the centre of Jesus' teaching, and that I have called above the essence of religion; second, that no man who believes in the fundamental value for the modern world of the essentials of religion as defined above, and in the necessity for the definite organization of religion for the sake of making it socially effective, needs to withdraw himself from the religious groups, and thereby to exert his personal influence against the spread of the essential religious ideals, since in America, at least, he will have no difficulty in finding religious groups who demand nothing of their adherents more than the belief in the foregoing ideals, coupled with an honest effort to live in conformity with them; third, that a very large fraction of the

altruistic and humanitarian and forward-looking work of the world, in all its forms, has today its mainsprings in the Christian churches. My own judgment is that about ninety-five per cent of it has come, and is coming, directly or indirectly, from the influence of organized religion in the United States. My own judgment is that, if the influence of American churches in the furtherance of socially wholesome and forward-looking movements, in the spread of conscientious and unselfish living of all sorts, were to be eliminated, our democracy would in a few years become so corrupt that it could not endure. These last two are, however, merely individual judgments, the correctness of which I cannot prove. Some will, no doubt, differ with me in them.

Now looking to the influence of religion in the future, I have in the preceding found the essence of the gospel of Jesus in the Golden Rule, which, broadly interpreted, means the development in the individual of a sense of social responsibility. Civilization itself is dependent in the last analysis primarily upon just this thing. The change from the individual life of the animal to the group life of civilized man, especially in a world of science, a life of ever-expanding complexity as our scientific civilization advances, is obviously impossible unless, in general, the individual learns, in ever-increasing measure, to subordinate his impulses and interests to the furtherance of the group life. The reason that the western world, which has led, as we westerners think, in the development of civilization, adopted Christianity as its religion is to be found in the last analysis, I suspect, in the fact that western civilization with its highly organized group life found that it could not possibly develop without it; and if this is so, the future is certainly going to need the essentials of Christianity even more than the past has needed them. In other words, the job that the churches in the past have been in the main trying to do, and the job that, I think, in spite of their weaknesses and follies, they have in the main succeeded fairly well in doing; namely, the job of developing the consciences, the ideals, and the aspirations of mankind, must be done by some agency in the future even more effectively than it has been done in the past.

There are just two ways in which this can be done; namely, first, by destroying organized religion as Russia has recently been attempting to do, and building upon its ruins some other organization which will carry on the work that the church has in the main done in the past, some other organization which will embody the essentials of religion, but be free from its faults. The second way is to assist organized religion *as it now exists* to eliminate its faults and to be more effective in emphasizing and in spreading, with ever-increasing vigor, its essentials. The second method may perhaps be impossible in some countries. I should need to know those countries better than I do now before I could express an opinion. But, for our own country, I feel altogether sure of my ground, and I take it that most thinking men will agree with me that the second way is the only feasible way.

In the United States organized religion has already undergone an amazing evolution and has thus shown its capacity to evolve. It first sloughed off, or had cut away from it, the awful incubus of political power when the complete separation of church and state was decreed by the far-visioned men who made

our Constitution. Second, it has to a considerable degree—much more than in many countries—freed itself from the shackles that are imposed by central authority and vested rights and has thus *left itself free to evolve*. Third, it has within recent years been rapidly freeing itself, despite some sporadic indications to the contrary, from the curse of superstition, and getting nearer and nearer to the essentials of religion. Finally, if the growth of modern science has taught anything to religion and to the modern world, it is that *the method of progress is the method of evolution, not the method of revolution*. Let every man reflect on these things well before he assists by his influence in stabbing to death or in allowing to starve to death, organized religion in the United States.

Thus far I have presented the most outstanding and conspicuous contribution of religion to the development of the race. The two discoveries listed with that of the Golden Rule in my opening sentence introduce us to the very mainsprings of the contribution of science to human progress. The idea that God, or Nature, or the Universe, whatever term you prefer, is not a being of caprice and whim as had been the case in all the main body of thinking of the ancient world, but is, instead, a God who rules through law, or a Nature capable of being depended upon, or a universe of consistency, of orderliness and of the beauty that goes with order—that idea has *made* modern science, and it is unquestionably the foundation of modern civilization.

It is because of this discovery, or because of the introduction of this idea into human thinking, and because of the *faith* of the scientist in it, that he has been able to harness the forces of nature and to make them do the work that enslaved human beings were forced to do in all preceding civilizations.

Yes, and much more than this, for it is not merely the material side of life that this idea has changed. It has also revolutionized the whole mode of thought of the race. It has changed the philosophic and religious conceptions of mankind. It has laid the foundations for a new and a stupendous advance in man's conception of God, for a sublimer view of the world and of man's place and destiny in it. The anthropomorphic God of the ancient world, the God of human passions, frailties, caprices, and whims is gone, and obviously with it the old duty, namely, merely or chiefly the duty to propitiate him, so that he may be induced to treat you, either in this world or the next, or in both, better than he treats your neighbor. Can anyone question the advance that has been made in the diminishing prevalence of these medieval, essentially childish, and essentially selfish ideas? The new God is the God of law and order, the new duty to know that order and to get into harmony with it, to learn how to make the world a better place for mankind to live in, not merely how to save your individual soul.¹ However, once destroy our confi-

¹ "Concerning what ultimately becomes of *the individual* in the process, science has added nothing and it has subtracted nothing. So far as science is concerned religion can treat that problem precisely as it has in the past, or it can treat it in some entirely new way if it wishes. For that problem is entirely outside the field of science now, though it need not necessarily always remain so. Science has undoubtedly been responsible for a certain change in religious thinking as to the relative values of individual and race salvation. For obviously by definitely introducing the most stimulating and inspiring motive for altruistic effort which has ever been

dence in the principle of uniformity, our belief in the rule of law, and our effectiveness immediately disappears, our method ceases to be dependable, and our laboratories become deserted.

I am not worrying here over the recent introduction of the so-called "principle of uncertainty" in microscopic processes, an event that is causing so much excitement among physicists just now. This may indeed be consoling or, at least, illuminating to those non-physicists who have been worrying their heads over their inability to reconcile the principle of law with the facts of free-will and of responsibility. We physicists have had much worse contradictions than these to put up with in the subject of physics alone, as for example, the reconciliation of the wave theory of light with the essentially corpuscular light-quant theory. Experiment has told us that both theories are right, and we have had the limitations of our knowledge jolted into us enough times lately in physics to believe it, in spite of our inability to see as yet just how the reconciliation is to be made.

This fact worries Mr. Mencken, as it does all essentially assertive (*i. e.*, dogmatic), minds, so that in a recent review of Eddington's extraordinarily profound book, "The Nature of the Physical Universe," he calls for another Huxley to tell us just exactly what is what in physics. But physicists have never been strong on dogmatism, not even in Huxley's day, and they are much less so now than then. We admit, to the complete bewilderment of minds like Mr. Mencken's, that we do not know everything yet.

In this book, Eddington points out that it may be illuminating to those who worry about free-will and determinism to know that in the subject of modern statistics, the behavior of a very large number of human beings such, for example, as the percentage of them that will get married per year is accurately predicted, though the behavior of a particular individual in the group is completely unpredictable and his choice unhampered. Here is certainly a specific illustration of the co-existence of the reign of law with the practical freedom of choice which each individual knows he has. But I don't think this particular problem ever worried the physicist, for he has always known *that his ignorance was as yet quite ample enough to cover the links in the reconciliation that must exist*. Eighteenth-and-nineteenth century materialism never had any lure for him, for it always represented quite as pure dogmatism—assertiveness without knowledge—as did medieval theology, *and modern developments have pushed it completely out of sight*. For *matter* is no longer a mere game of marbles played by blind men. An atom is now an amazingly complicated *organism*, possessing many interrelated parts and exhibiting many functions and properties—energy properties, radiating properties, wave properties, and

introduced, namely, the motive arising from the conviction that we ourselves may be vital agents in the march of things, science has provided a reason for altruistic effort which is quite independent of the ultimate destination of the individual and is also much more alluring to some sorts of minds than that of singing hosannas forever around the throne. To that extent science is undoubtedly influencing and changing religion quite profoundly now. The emphasis upon making this world better is certainly the dominant and characteristic element in the religion of today."—ROBERT A. MILLIKAN, "Evolution in Science and Religion" (pp. 83 and 84), Yale University Press, 1927.

other properties quite as mysterious as any that used to masquerade under the name of "mind," so that the phrases "all is matter" and "all is mind" have now become merely shibboleths completely devoid of meaning.

However, whether the principle of determinism applies to infinitely minute, practically unattainable processes or not is not here important. For it is the existence of the *idea* of natural law or orderliness with which we are concerned rather than with the proof of its universality, and no one who has any conception of what science has done since about 1600 A.D., the date at which this idea first began to spread throughout the consciousness of mankind, will be likely to question my initial statement that it is one of the three ideas which, whether true or false as a *universal* generalization, has at least exerted, and is undoubtedly still destined to exert, a stupendous influence upon the destinies of mankind.

The third, or evolutionary idea, is the youngest of the two great ideas born of modern science. It is not yet one hundred years old. Introduced by Darwin solely in its application to biological evolution, as discovery after discovery in modern science has pushed back farther and farther the age of the stars, the age of the solar system, the age of the earth, the age of the rocks, of fossil life, of prehistoric man, of recorded history, of social institutions, the evolutionary theory has come to dominate in a very broad way almost every aspect of human thought. We have come to the realization, not only that if biological forms, but also if social institutions like the family, the state, religion, or even war, have survived, it is because, after ages of trial in which many other institutions have competed with them and disappeared, they have had survival value. We have come to *study* institutions to see *why* they have survived. We have come to realize that if we wish to eliminate an old institution, like war, for example, we are not likely to succeed simply by wishing it gone, nor indeed simply by pacifistic propaganda of any sort. We are only likely to succeed if the conditions which gave it its survival value have been, or can be, eliminated. Hence, the establishment of a League of Nations, of a World Court, and the like, aimed precisely at eliminating some, at least, of these conditions. In my judgment, however, war is now in process of being abolished, chiefly by the relentless advance of modern science, the *principal diverter of man's energies and interests from the warlike to the peaceful arts*. War will disappear, like the dinosaur, when changes in world conditions, such as are now being brought about primarily by the growth of modern science and its applications—changes due to the advent of world-wide, nearly instantaneous intercommunication, and to the enormous modern stimulation of international trade and commerce, bringing with it a sense of interdependence and of the necessity of international understandings—when these changes have destroyed its survival value.

Again, because of the growth of this evolutionary idea in human thinking, we have come to see that an institution like religion, in so far as it deals with conceptions of God, the integrating factor in this Universe of atoms and of ether, and of mind, and of ideas, and of duties, and of intelligence, has not been and cannot be a fixed thing, that it has been continually changing with

the growth of human knowledge, and that it will continue to expand as knowledge continues to grow.

I have thus presented the most outstanding and conspicuous contribution of religion to human progress, and the two most representative and significant contributions of science to human progress, and we are now ready to ask how these contributions are interrelated. The answer is altogether obvious. The world of science dominated by the reign of law has necessitated the increasing association of men into co-operating groups, but the effectiveness of those groups, indeed the whole group life, becomes at once impossible unless the altruistic ideals of religion, the sense of social responsibility, permeates the whole, while the evolutionary concept, the last contribution of science, is absolutely essential to an understanding of the development both of religion and of science. In a word, these three ideas and ideals interlock everywhere in a mutually helpful way. Not one of them can have a normal and effective existence without the others.

Whence, then, arises this strange idea, so often heard in popular discussions, of an incompatibility between *science* and *religion*? Here, again, I think the answer is clear. There is obviously no incompatibility between science and the *essentials of religion* as I have defined them. But individual religions or branches of a religion often contain more than these essentials. Every movement which becomes popular and gains large numbers of adherents inevitably draws into itself men who are not actuated solely, nor even at all, by its ideals, but who are using it to further their own ends. Those ends may be very worthy ones, arising from the best of motives in minds of restricted understanding or limited intelligence, or they may be very unworthy ones, such as the desire for personal aggrandizement or political power. Everyone knows that the history of Christianity is not at all free even from influences of the latter sort. The so-called War of the Reformation is usually described as a religious war, and the horrors of it are sometimes attributed to the influence of Christianity; but I think that most historians will agree with the statement that it was not primarily a religious war at all, although both sides undoubtedly worked overtime, as they always do, to try to prove that God was on their side. In other words, religion was its shibboleth, not its cause. It represented in the first instance simply the terrific struggle of a group of northern princes to free themselves from the yoke of a southern power which had used the machinery of a religious organization for cementing and perpetuating its control.

Again, the anticlerical parties today in many countries that possess them represent in part, at least, the efforts of reformers to break the *political* power of groups that have seized it and hold it in the *name* of religion, when the real issues obviously have nothing whatever to do with religion. Still again, Voltaire in his attack on the church was not attacking religious ideals in the least. He did not even call himself an atheist. He was far too intelligent a man for that. Such presumptuous assumption of complete knowledge of the whole of what there is, or is not, in the universe I have never heard made by any men of real knowledge and understanding, for such men are always

both humble and reverent. Fulness of knowledge always and necessarily means some understanding of the depths of our ignorance, and that always is conducive to both humility and reverence.

If you and I lived in some countries today I have no doubt that we should be in the anticlerical groups, but it would not be because we had lost confidence in the essentials of religion, but rather because we thought that these essentials had become so buried under excrescences of the kind I have been describing, introduced into the organization of religion by well-meaning but unintelligent men, or by designing men, that the net result was harmful rather than socially helpful.

But I have here been talking, not about religion and science, but rather about organized religion and politics—a pair that all of us will agree ought never to have been mated, and where they have been so mated ought to be divorced with the same celerity that characterizes proceedings at Reno. Fortunately, this problem does not exist for us in the United States. I have introduced the subject merely to show how the essentials of religion may, and sometimes do, become lost in the *organization* of religion. Present-day Buddhism is, I suppose, a more striking illustration of this than is anything that can be found among the many ramifications of Christianity.

But by the very same method described above in the discussion of politics and religion there has grown up another excrescence upon the essentials of religion which introduces us at once into the very heart of the alleged conflict between science and religion. This has come about not so much, like the marriage of politics with religion, because of the selfishness and ambition of men (real motives though often masking even in the minds of their possessors under softer names) as through the ignorance of men.

The amazing insight of Jesus is revealed by the fact that he kept himself so free from creedal statements, particularly statements that reflected the state of man's knowledge or ignorance of the universe that was characteristic of his times. A large part of his sayings seem to us now, in spite of the enormous increase in our knowledge of the universe that has taken place since his time, to be just as true today as they seemed to be then. The things that a man does not say often reveal the understanding and penetration of his mind even more than the things that he says. The fact that Jesus confined himself so largely to the statement of truths that still seem to us to have eternal value is what has made him a leader and teacher of such supreme influence throughout the centuries. But his followers, unlike him, have throughout the past two thousand years in many instances *loaded* their various branches of his religion with creedal statements which are full of their own woefully human frailties. The difference is so enormous as to justify calling his statements, as the world has been wont to do, Godlike in comparison.

What are, in contrast, these man-made creeds? Admittedly they have been written by *men*, groups of men called together for the purpose, men so uninspired that very few of them have ever left any lasting memory of themselves behind. How many people now know of any name that was ever associated with any one of them? These men have often reflected in detail in their creeds

the state of knowledge, or the state of ignorance, of the universe, or of God, whichever term you prefer, characteristic of their times. If someone wishes me to change that last implied definition of Deity so as to make it read, the unifying principle in the universe, I shall not object, for that there is a unity, an interrelatedness, a wholeness to it all, we ourselves being but parts of that whole, is attested by all experience, including, I should like to add, the amazing new scientific developments in the fields of ether physics, relativity, and wave-mechanics. That is only my prosaic paraphrase of the lines of Tennyson, the poet of science, when he says:

The sun, the moon, the stars, the hills and the plains,
Are not these, O Soul, the vision of Him who reigns?
The ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear this vision—were it not He?
Speak to Him, thou, for He hears and spirit with spirit shall meet.
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

Now with the conception of God changing continuously as man has grown in knowledge from the time when he pictured his God in the form of a calf, or a crocodile, or a monstrous man, to the time when the poet described God, as above, as the soul of the universe, what must be the relation between science, or the ever-expanding knowledge of man, and the long since vanished conceptions of the universe, or of God, frozen in ancient man-made creeds? Obviously one of inescapable conflict. And in so far as these creedal excrescences have covered up, or displaced, the essentials of religion, there are obviously no alternatives except (1) to remove that sort of a deadening growth from the heart of religion, or (2) failing that possibility to desert a hopeless religion, or (3) to give up science.

A choice between the last two alternatives might in some countries be a necessity. But fortunately in the United States, which, being the widest flung democracy in the world, needs, and indeed must have, if it is to endure, the essentials of religion more than any other country, there is no such choice necessary. For in this country religion has been able to develop wholly untrammelled by political interference, and it has in many of its branches been absolutely free to develop without the restraining influence of central authority. I have myself belonged to two churches, one a Union church and one a Congregational church, both of which were unhampered by a creed of any sort. Other churches are continually revising or modifying their creeds with our growing knowledge.

Within the United States there is then not the slightest reason why religion cannot keep completely in step with the demands of our continuously growing understanding of the world. Here religious groups are to be found which correspond to practically every stage of the development of our knowledge and understanding. Here there is no need, in the case of any individual, of a clash ever arising between science and religion. Personally I believe that essential religion is one of the world's supremest needs, and I believe that one of the greatest contributions that the United States ever can, or ever will, make

to world progress—greater by far than any contribution which we ever have made or ever can make to the science of government—will consist in *furnishing an example to the world of how the religious life of a nation can evolve intelligently, wholesomely, inspiringly, reverently, completely divorced from all unreason, all superstition, and all unwholesome emotionalism.*

EDITORS' NOTE

Quite aside from emergencies created by war, the question of participation in business or the professions is one which is posed to most young women. Only a minority would embark upon a professional career if it meant abandoning any prospect of a home and children, but there are many who maintain that the two are not irreconcilable.

In the two following essays, opposing points of view are presented by two women, both married and both professional writers. Edith Efron (b. 1922), after graduating from Barnard College, worked for several newspapers, and is now a staff writer for the New York Times Magazine. Ann Maulsby (b. 1906) went to Radcliffe College and got her start in writing when an editor read a letter she had written to a New York newspaper. "The most important thing that ever happened to me," she writes, "was my marriage to Gerald Maulsby."

EDITH EFRON

CAREER WOMAN OR HOUSEWIFE?

IS WOMAN'S "place" behind a desk—or in front of a stove? That is, was and probably will continue to be the question. It will become more acute if there is extensive unemployment after the war. Many are talking already of solving the job problem by sending the woman back to the home. The opposition—an articulate coterie of career women—declares the whole "women in the home" theory arrant nonsense and will have none of it.

Rising to defend the nineteen million working women who need their jobs, the career woman attacks the four conventions which declare that the woman is happier in the home, and that for the sake of her children, her husband and American home life she should remain there eternally.

She needs but the slightest provocation to throw the book at anyone who declares that the woman belongs in the home—for her own sake.

"Career Woman or Housewife?" from *The New York Times*, March 4, 1945. Reprinted by permission of the author and publishers.

"So!" demands the career woman angrily. "The woman is happier in her home, is she? That, sir, is a social stereotype, a symbol of a cultural lag! And you, sir, are a reactionary fool!"

If she is up on her facts she may quote Gene Weltfish, a lady anthropologist and career woman who studies social stereotypes for a living and who says:

"The woman's life in the home turns her into a frustrated crank. Her gregarious nature is thwarted, for housework is a solitary activity. Her social encounters are limited to the butcher, the laundryman and, if she has a very young child, to a few other women whose social scope is equally narrow. She lives vicariously through her husband and children, and in her attempt to assert her personality through them she becomes a nag and a domineering mother."

The career woman could stop at that. Or she might quote still another female expert—Dr. Karen Horney, a New York psychiatrist:

"Staying at home with little to do—particularly after children have started school—will make a neurotic woman more neurotic," says Dr. Horney. "It probably wouldn't affect a psychologically healthy woman—but there are very few such women. It is definitely good for the wife and mother to get some training and go to work."

And to summarize the situation fully, the career woman explains, from her own experience as well as the books, that working outside the home—and for pay—gives a woman "ego gratification"; it gives her psychological freedom; it develops her previously thwarted personality.

Reluctantly, of course, she admits that many women don't want to work, and many, if they have to work, would rather not.

"But," says the career woman determinedly, "plenty of women do want to work. And the rest will have to learn to want to. They had to be taught to want the vote, didn't they? If women are ever to become anything but frustrated parasites in this world they'll have to force their way out of the kitchen—even against their own wills!"

Thus, sounding the clarion call of the woman's personal freedom, 1945's spiritual descendant of the old-time feminist moves on to the second controversial problem—children.

"People," she says, "are always trying to ship the woman out of her job on the ground that her child needs her all day long. This is one of the major fallacies of our age!"

She points to the nursery school—the symbol of the child's emergence from the home, as well as the mother's. Once limited to the patronage of the wealthy mother or to the progressive parent, the nursery school is now beginning to function on an inexpensive, nation-wide basis. In Los Angeles, for example, the career woman could tell you, there are 240 child-care centers with a clientele of 10,000 children and huge waiting lists.

"They're overcrowded," she admits, "and there aren't anywhere near enough in the country. But the demand is there and they're being built."

And then she explains just why the nursery school is not a stop-gap or a substitute, but a recommended environment for a youngster. She quotes modern psychologists by the ream who declare that the child learns to adjust more

rapidly to society by associating with children rather than growing up in the company of one female adult. In addition, they say, the average mother cannot afford the educational equipment which the average nursery provides. And in such an environment, these psychologists conclude, the child is relieved of the "excessive mother dominance" characteristic of America's small family units.

"Furthermore," says this militant lady, quoting from nursery school experts, "the child adjusts rapidly to the realization that his mother works. He does not suffer in the least unless he is informed by the radio, the movies or the newspapers that he is 'really' a pseudo-orphan. And if handled wisely he learns to be as proud of his mother's accomplishments as he is of his father's."

She refers once again to Psychiatrist Horney, who says: "The child who knows that his parents love him is emotionally secure. He does not have to spend every waking moment with his mother. Mornings, evenings and weekends are enough to create a sound relationship."

Eventually, the career woman hopes, there will also be nurseries for children under 2 and 3 years old in every community, with resident physicians, and perhaps a parent or two on hourly patrol. Thus, the woman can work even when she has an infant. This, predicts the career woman, will probably increase the birth rate, because many of our educated women who want careers don't have children because the facilities for caring for them outside the home are still few and far between. In fact, the career woman reports, quoting from Sociologist Willard Waller, the average college girl has .7 of a child!

The ideal, according to this female crusader, is the time when the working day will be no more than five hours long, so both the woman and the man can have full-time careers, can have the fun of being parents too, and know that their children are well cared for while they work.

With abandon, today's career woman approaches her third problem—her husband.

A smart husband, announces the career woman, adjusts rapidly to the situation of a working wife. Often he becomes astonishingly cooperative. As one such husband said:

"I remember when my father was asked to help with the dishes. He'd pull down all the shades for fear that one of his cronies might see him through the window, and then he'd help. We'd have been whaled if we'd told anyone."

"But," continued this adjusted husband of a working wife, "I'd feel like a fool if I didn't help my wife. She works as hard as I do, and we both live in the house and eat our dinners there. I figure I ought to share any extra work."

This, declares the career woman happily, is no longer an uncommon attitude. Men are attending cooking classes these days—although it is still supposed to be funny. And not too long ago, she reminds you, most front pages carried feature stories in bold type about the infant-care courses being given to fathers.

"As the woman leaves the home," the career woman comments, "Papa rapidly becomes a father instead of a galloping meal ticket."

On the other hand, she points out, the husband of the woman who works

is also coping with a lot of psychological problems. As a wife grows more independent the woman-dominated man feels lost, she explains.

"After all," says freedom's disciple, "to lose a child-mother-valet-nursemaid-private secretary-bootblack-and-cook all at once is bound to upset a man. And frequently he stays upset, instead of making friends with his streamlined wife and accepting the matter gracefully. Notice the growing divorce rate. It's largely due to that."

And so, the career woman continues, many a man in self-defense invokes the social stereotype as gospel. He claims that to be a wife is a twenty-four-hour job. He says that a well-run home must be supervised constantly. He insists that the children and the husband need the emotional support of a woman who isn't tired or burdened with private matters.

"And look at him!" cries the career woman scornfully. "He ignores the psychiatrist's warning of what such a life does to his wife, and indirectly to him. He makes bad jokes about wives. He escapes continually from his own to seek relief with 'the boys.' And on Sundays, when he stays at home, he amuses himself by looking at the funny papers—the colored images of himself: Caspar Milquetoast, the wife-ridden Jiggs, the timid Mr. of 'Mr. and Mrs.' And does he ever benefit by their mute messages? No!"

Eventually, the career woman hopes, men will be able to accept women without either patronizing or depending on them. They will treat them as equals, as plain human beings, who have desires and aspirations similar to their own. And marriages will be a loving friendship, not, as she describes it acidly, a barter of a woman's ego for a man's money. This, says the career woman, will bring about the end of what John Steinbeck in "Cannery Row" calls the "twisted and lascivious sisterhood of married spinsters whose husbands respect the home, but don't like it very much."

That this is already beginning, the career woman has no doubt. And it is beginning to affect home life too. She discusses home life—her fourth problem—with enthusiasm.

"It's not disappearing at all," she says, when confronted with that accusation. "It's merely changing. In a way, there's more of it, because the working woman has more to contribute intellectually, and so does her child. And in a way, there's less of it, because the former 'home' functions are being professionalized."

She points to the fact that it is no longer unconventional for a woman to have the weekly wash done by the laundry, the baby's diapers sterilized by a diaper service, the windows cleaned by a window cleaner, her fine seams sewn by a tailor. So in time, predicts the career woman, will other household tasks be industrialized.

Certainly she thinks domestic service is about to undergo a drastic revision. Such leaders of feminine opinion as Dean Virginia Gildersleeve of Barnard College have flatly come out for "scientific domestic service"—a system whereby domestic service would be dignified by established wages, hours and qualifications. Thus, some women will one day enter domestic service as a profession. And another link with the past will be broken for the feminine worker.

And so, she continues, home life is developing into something new. The home, which at present—and here she quotes a historian—is “largely a receptacle for the tag-ends and butts of the large productive family group of pre-industrial days, is turning into a place for rest and recreation alone, rather than a place where the woman spends three-quarters of her day in the kitchen performing the tasks for her family that have not yet been tackled by America’s organizational genius.

And the career woman frequently envisions a world—not too far off in the future—where everyone lives in apartment hotels (or in private homes with hotel services)—with nurseries on the roof and libraries in the cellar. To these well-equipped and professionally managed homes the husband returns from his job and the wife from hers, and the kiddies from various types of schools. And in the late afternoons and evenings the good life is lived, untainted by out-dated mechanical tasks—as only the very rich can live it today.

If the public is a little dismayed by all this, it doesn’t particularly bother the visionary career woman. She knows that the role of women is in a transitional period, that many women themselves are largely apathetic on these problems. She also knows that unemployment may force many of them back into the home. But she also knows that all progress is a matter of two steps forward and one step back. She is content to believe what Carrie Chapman Catt, famous American feminist, said very recently: “The end of the woman’s movement is not yet.”

And if people snicker at the career woman’s concepts, and laugh at her dreams, she suspects that she needn’t worry overly much. After all, she points out, the feminist of yore was also considered a rather weird girl in her day. She merely wanted women to vote. She wanted women to go to college with men, to own their own money, to have legal guardianship rights over their own children. And in the process of achieving these manifestly sensible things her worthy contemporaries almost sent her to jail!

ANN MAULSBY

HOUSEWIFE OR CAREER WOMAN?

MOST of the fancy talk about career women is done by career women. Women anthropologists are quoted as saying that women in the home are frustrated. Women psychiatrists have been known to declare that it is good for a wife to go to work. Career women even insist blatantly that their husbands and children are happier than the husbands and

“Housewife or Career Woman?” from *The New York Times Magazine*, March 11, 1945. Reprinted by permission of the author and publishers.

children of housewives. Not only does the housewife herself have little opportunity to tell the world how well-adjusted she is, or how happy, but the husbands and children of both groups are also notably silent.

Last Sunday in this magazine the career wife set forth the case for herself. Today the housewife, rather surprised to find that she has to build a "case" to justify her position, answers the career woman's claims that the wife, the children, the husband, and American home life as a whole are all better off when the wife has a career of her own.

The word "housewife," as defined by Funk & Wagnalls, means the mistress of a household; a woman who manages domestic affairs. The word is full of dignity, and does not merit the disdain with which it is uttered by the career girls. A woman, questioned about her vocation, can say more proudly, "I am the mistress of a household" than "I am a saleswoman at Arnold Constable's" or "I am secretary to the fourth vice president of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey." But ever since the militant career women began to make such a shrill clatter about their emancipation from the home, "housewife" as a word has been shorn of its original glamour and nobility. Some years ago the more sensitive housewives invented the word "homemaker" to describe their status, a nice-Nellyism into which their rackety sisters had forced them. Most housewives today, however, no longer feel on the defensive, and seek no euphemism for their title.

The wife who has chosen to be mistress of her household is better-adjusted, calmer, and therefore happier, than the career wife who spends her whole day in an office.

This statement does not apply to neurotic women who, according to the psychiatrist quoted by the career woman last Sunday, are better off in jobs than at home. For there are some women who lack the imagination to make housework exciting, who need a job as a kind of therapy. The statement does apply to the healthy-minded wife who loves her husband. She is puzzled when the career woman cries that a happy housewife is a social stereotype, for there is nothing stereotyped about happiness, and she has no intention of surrendering all she cherishes in exchange for an unrewarding job in business, simply to avoid the glib indignities of her working sisters. She does not feel like a frustrated crank, and only a sterile-minded woman has to live vicariously through her husband. She suspects that these uncomplimentary charges are made against her by women who are suffering from a sense of guilt, who seek to cover up their own spiritual inadequacies by proclaiming that it is the housewife who is wrong.

To the mistress of a household, the world is full of a number of things. For the career woman, life holds two things: her job first, and her home and husband second. Of all the thousands of career wives, there are few whose occupations offer any real opportunity for self-expression or self-improvement. If it is a gratification of her ego that she seeks, how much more completely that end can be achieved in managing her family's manifold domestic affairs than in plugging away at a commonplace job. The housewife thinks it is an inconsiderable business to work in an office in exchange for a pay check when

she can exercise her various talents at home and receive the subtler recompense of a husband's increased devotion. There is nothing thwarting in this experience, and her husband would be the first to deny the career woman's assertion that she is a parasite.

The housewife may indeed be a scrubber of floors, a scourer of bathtubs. She may be valet and private secretary to her husband, and nursemaid to her children. In addition she often takes charge of the family finances, is a decorator and a gardener, and she plans the family's social life. If she is extraordinarily talented she is also a superb cook. Does the career woman honestly believe that an office job is more varied and fascinating than this?

Furthermore, her reading is less likely to be restricted to mystery stories than the tired career woman's, and she is therefore a greater cultural force in the home. She is more easily able to keep her figure trim, because her daily duties in the house and outside it give her more exercise than the office worker whose beam broadens and whose muscles sag as she sits at her desk.

The housewife is more relaxed than her wage-earning sister because she can plan her work as she pleases, and she can usually find time for a quick nap during the day if she needs it. While the career woman dashes to the office in the morning and works feverishly all day in order to reap the financial benefits of this self-imposed beating, the housewife goes serenely about her work, conscious of the unequaled sense of fulfillment a woman can derive only from employing all her talents and imagination in making her home a harmonious place for the family to live.

What is it that causes the career woman to feel that life is not worth living unless she slaves to make money? The housewife guesses that in this age of emancipation, while women have struggled for equal rights with men, the career woman's thinking has become confused, and she is demanding freedom to work as if it were something her nature actually craved. Certainly she has a right to work if she wants to. And in a national emergency when women are actually needed in essential industries even housewives must go to work.

But, except for a few who have a real urge for a career, an outstanding talent in a special field, no happily married woman who is honest with herself could possibly prefer the office to the home. The housewife is willing to let her grimly misguided sister proceed on her way if she must, but she can herself become militant, although she shudders at the word, when the career girl says, "Plenty of women do want to work. And the rest will have to be taught to want to." The housewife is a light-hearted woman because she is a contented woman, but it will be a bad day for the career girls if the housewives ever have to battle with them for their right to stay at home.

On the subject of children, the career woman makes the following claims: Nursery school is better than the home because the child adjusts more rapidly to society by associating with other children than by living with one female adult, and because the child is thereby relieved of excessive mother dominance. Most children do not have to go to nursery school in order to play with other children, and if the child does need nursery school he can be sent whether his mother works or not. It is true that some mothers are excessively domineering,

but the career woman's implication that most housewives have this tendency is obviously false. As a matter of fact, the career mother, after the exigencies of her business day, is more likely to overpower her children with her own importance—or to go overboard in the opposite direction—than the mother who has been with her children all day and whom they therefore take for granted as a natural phenomenon.

The child "adjusts," says the career woman, to the realization that his mother works. Granted that he may do so, why force upon the child the burden of an additional adjustment while he is already having to adjust to his environment every day of his life?

A sound family relationship, she continues, can be established during mornings and evenings and week-ends. The housewife wonders what she means by "sound." No doubt the child recognizes his mother when he sees her, but only a mother who spends the whole day with her child can possibly watch all his little thought patterns and understand precisely what he means at all times. The sense of security the child derives from his mother's understanding of his mind as it develops cannot be equaled by any substitute the career mother has to offer. A prominent New York pediatrician, herself a career woman, says: "A child's maximum happiness and security can be obtained only when he lives in close association with his mother. It is only in an exceptional case that any makeshift is wholly successful."

If the career girl honestly wants to know the truth about the happiness of children, let her observe the children. It will be clear to her that the most relaxed and poised are those of the mother who has been with her children constantly during the first four or five years of their lives.

It is when the career woman sounds off about husbands that the housewife begins to suspect that her sister is not only a cold proposition but is a bit benighted to boot. Can it be possible that the career girl has been so engrossed in her job that she hasn't had time to learn about men? Or is it that she simply doesn't care?

"The smart husband adjusts rapidly to the situation of a working wife," says the career woman coldly. There's that word "adjust" again. What kind of woman is it who, led astray by the razzmatazz of the feminists, will brazenly stride forth from her home, leaving her unfortunate husband and children to "adjust" as best they may? Furthermore, she says smugly that her husband often helps with the household chores under these circumstances.

What kind of home is it in which both husband and wife must use their after-office hours doing housework? Where is the leisure? Where is the time for living? That this arrangement is necessary in some families whose earnings are below standard is a melancholy fact; it is certainly not a practice to be followed if it can possibly be avoided. In sharing the more menial household tasks, declares the career woman, the husband becomes a father instead of a meal ticket. Who but an occasional shallow and lazy woman has ever thought of her husband as a meal ticket? The career woman gives herself away: she does not value her husband as highly as he deserves.

The career woman pretends that it is the men alone who say, "Woman's

place is in the home." Hundreds of thousands of housewives like it there, and they are happily not possessed of a perverse inferiority complex which would make them feel that they were bartering their egos for their husband's money, as their career-minded sisters tell them they are.

The argument that the career wife gets out into the world of ideas and thereby becomes a better intellectual companion for her husband is patently fallacious. As already mentioned, most so-called career women have run-of-the-mill jobs which do not stimulate their brains, and their daily associations lack variety. The woman at home at her busiest has at least what mental activity is afforded by the reading of one good newspaper every day. Moreover, the housewife, unless she has several children and no domestic help at all, has far more scope for a diversity of interests and is infinitely less likely to fall into a mental rut than her career sister whose horizon is often limited to her job.

The career girl holds up as typical of her kind the woman whose family income is large enough to allow her home and her children to receive competent care in her absence. At the same time she implies that the typical housewife is a dull-witted slattern, worn out by a life of slavery to a whip-cracking husband and half a dozen muling brats. There are, of course, many economic strata in both groups, and the ability of the housewife to avail herself of the cultural facilities outside her home is restricted by the amount of free time she has. She may have some free time every day, or she may have the toughest job in the world, of having to run single-handed a large household which includes several children. But, unless she has enormous responsibilities which outweigh her vitality, she is in a better position to be an agreeable companion to her husband after dark than the average wife whose day is expended in typing mechanically other people's letters.

What devastation the career woman may ultimately wreak upon the American male if she persists in competing with him in his own field is an awesome subject over which the American woman well may brood. In the meantime, the mistress of her household believes that the only authority on a husband's happiness is the man himself. Ask him.

Dr. Alfred Cahan, in his "Statistical Analysis of American Divorce," shows that the increase in women wage-earners is one of the important factors contributing to increasing divorce in this country. The career girls freely admit this fact. But, although they blame it on the husband's inability to "adjust," how can they assert that home life gains when the wife has a career outside it? How can it gain when the home is of secondary importance to the wife and receives her most casual attention, when the husband and children grow neurotic through the disarrangement of their lives, when the home is no longer what it should be: a haven of harmony in a discordant world?

BERTRAND RUSSELL *The notoriety which inevitably attends a frank statement of an unorthodox attitude toward the marriage relationship has occasionally overshadowed the solid contributions of Bertrand Russell (b. 1872), and more than once has made him the focal point of public agitation. The son of a lord, he attended Trinity College, Cambridge, and became recognized in the fields of both mathematics and philosophy. He has made periodical, and sometimes turbulent, appearances as a teacher in a number of institutions, among them Harvard, the University of Peking, Chicago, and the University of California at Los Angeles. "The Good Life" is an example of the less controversial side of Mr. Russell's thinking, too often overlooked.*

THE GOOD LIFE

THERE have been at different times and among different people many varying conceptions of the good life. To some extent the differences were amenable to argument; this was when men differed as to the means to achieve a given end. Some think that prison is a good way of preventing crime; others hold that education would be better. A difference of this sort can be decided by sufficient evidence. But some differences cannot be tested in this way. Tolstoy condemned all war; others have held the life of a soldier doing battle for the right to be very noble. Here there was probably involved a real difference as to ends. Those who praise the soldier usually consider the punishment of sinners a good thing in itself; Tolstoy did not think so. On such a matter no argument is possible. I cannot, therefore, prove that my view of the good life is right; I can only state my view, and hope that as many as possible will agree. My view is this:

The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge.

Knowledge and love are both indefinitely extensible; therefore, however good a life may be, a better life can be imagined. Neither love without knowledge nor knowledge without love can produce a good life. In the Middle Ages, when pestilence appeared in a country, holy men advised the population to assemble in churches and pray for deliverance; the result was that the infection spread with extraordinary rapidity among the crowded masses of supplicants. This was an example of love without knowledge. The late War afforded an example of knowledge without love. In each case, the result was death on a large scale.

Although both love and knowledge are necessary, love is in a sense more fundamental, since it will lead intelligent people to seek knowledge, in order to find out how to benefit those whom they love. But if people are not intelligent, they will be content to believe what they have been told, and may do

"The Good Life," from *What I Believe* by Bertrand Russell. Published and copyrighted by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York.

harm in spite of the most genuine benevolence. Medicine affords perhaps the best example of what I mean. An able physician is more useful to a patient than the most devoted friend, and progress in medical knowledge does more for the health of the community than ill-informed philanthropy. Nevertheless, an element of benevolence is essential even here if any but the rich are to profit by scientific discoveries.

Love is a word which covers a variety of feelings; I have used it purposely, as I wish to include them all. Love as an emotion—which is what I am speaking about, for love “on principle” does not seem to me genuine—moves between two poles: on the one side, pure delight in contemplation; on the other, pure benevolence. Where inanimate objects are concerned, delight alone enters in: we cannot feel benevolence towards a landscape or a sonata. This type of enjoyment is presumably the source of art. It is stronger, as a rule, in very young children than in adults, who are apt to view objects in a utilitarian spirit. It plays a large part in our feelings towards human beings, some of whom have charm and some the reverse, when considered simply as objects of esthetic contemplation.

The opposite pole of love is pure benevolence. Men have sacrificed their lives to helping lepers; in such a case the love they felt cannot have had any element of esthetic delight. Parental affection, as a rule, is accompanied by pleasure in the child’s appearance, but remains strong when this element is wholly absent. It would seem odd to call a mother’s interest in a sick child “benevolence,” because we are in the habit of using this word to describe a pale emotion nine parts humbug. But it is difficult to find any other word to describe the desire for another person’s welfare. It is a fact that a desire of this sort may reach any degree of strength in the case of parental feeling. In other cases it is far less intense; indeed it would seem likely that all altruistic emotion is a sort of overflow of parental feeling, or sometimes a sublimation of it. For want of a better word, I shall call this emotion “benevolence.” But I want to make it clear that I am speaking of an emotion, not a principle, and that I do not include in it any feeling of superiority such as is sometimes associated with the word. The word “sympathy” expresses part of what I mean, but leaves out the element of activity that I wish to include.

Love at its fullest is an indissoluble combination of the two elements, delight and well-wishing. The pleasure of a parent in a beautiful and successful child combines both elements; so does sex-love at its best. But in sex-love benevolence will only exist where there is secure possession, since otherwise jealousy will destroy it, while perhaps actually increasing the delight in contemplation. Delight without well-wishing may be cruel; well-wishing without delight easily tends to become cold and a little superior. A person who wishes to be loved wishes to be the object of a love containing both elements, except in cases of extreme weakness, such as infancy and severe illness. In these cases benevolence may be all that is desired. Conversely, in cases of extreme strength admiration is more desired than benevolence: this is the state of mind of potentates and famous beauties. We only desire other people’s good wishes in proportion as we feel ourselves in need of help or in danger of harm from

them. At least, that would seem to be the biological logic of the situation, but it is not quite true to life. We desire affection in order to escape from the feeling of loneliness, in order to be, as we say, "understood." This is a matter of sympathy, not merely of benevolence; the person whose affection is satisfactory to us must not merely wish us well, but must know in what our happiness consists. But this belongs to the other element of the good life, namely knowledge.

In a perfect world, every sentient being would be to every other the object of the fullest love, compounded of delight, benevolence, and understanding inextricably blended. It does not follow that, in this actual world, we ought to attempt to have such feelings towards all the sentient beings whom we encounter. There are many in whom we cannot feel delight, because they are disgusting; if we were to do violence to our nature by trying to see beauties in them, we should merely blunt our susceptibilities to what we naturally find beautiful. Not to mention human beings, there are fleas and bugs and lice. We should have to be as hard pressed as the Ancient Mariner before we could feel delight in contemplating these creatures. Some saints, it is true, have called them "pearls of God," but what these men delighted in was the opportunity of displaying their own sanctity.

Benevolence is easier to extend widely, but even benevolence has its limits. If a man wished to marry a lady, we should not think the better of him for withdrawing if he found that someone else also wished to marry her: we should regard this as a fair field for competition. Yet his feelings towards a rival cannot be *wholly* benevolent. I think that in all descriptions of the good life here on earth we must assume a certain basis of animal vitality and animal instinct; without this, life becomes tame and uninteresting. Civilization should be something added to this, not substituted for it; the ascetic saint and the detached sage fail in this respect to be complete human beings. A small number of them may enrich a community; but a world composed of them would die of boredom.

These considerations lead to a certain emphasis on the element of delight as an ingredient in the best love. Delight, in this actual world, is unavoidably selective, and prevents us from having the same feelings towards all mankind. When conflicts arise between delight and benevolence, they must, as a rule, be decided by a compromise, not by a complete surrender of either. Instinct has its rights, and if we do violence to it beyond a point it takes vengeance in subtle ways. Therefore in aiming at a good life the limits of human possibility must be borne in mind. Here again, however, we are brought back to the necessity of knowledge.

When I speak of knowledge as an ingredient of the good life, I am not thinking of ethical knowledge, but of scientific knowledge and knowledge of particular facts. I do not think there is, strictly speaking, such a thing as ethical knowledge. If we desire to achieve some end, knowledge may show us the means, and this knowledge may loosely pass as ethical. But I do not believe that we can decide what sort of conduct is right or wrong except by

reference to its probable consequences. Given an end to be achieved, it is a question for science to discover how to achieve it. All moral rules must be tested by examining whether they tend to realize ends that we desire. I say ends that we desire, not ends that we *ought* to desire. What we "ought" to desire is merely what someone else wishes us to desire. Usually it is what the authorities wish us to desire—parents, schoolmasters, policemen, and judges. If you say to me "you ought to do so-and-so," the motive power of your remark lies in my desire for your approval—together, possibly, with rewards or punishments attached to your approval or disapproval. Since all behaviour springs from desire, it is clear that ethical notions can have no importance except as they influence desire. They do this through the desire for approval and the fear of disapproval. These are powerful social forces, and we shall naturally endeavour to win them to our side if we wish to realize any social purpose. When I say that the morality of conduct is to be judged by its probable consequences, I mean that I desire to see approval given to behaviour likely to realize social purposes which we desire, and disapproval to opposite behaviour. At present this is not done; there are certain traditional rules according to which approval and disapproval are meted out quite regardless of consequences.

The superfluity of theoretical ethics is obvious in simple cases. Suppose, for instance, that your child is ill. Love makes you wish to cure it, and science tells you how to do so. There is not an intermediate stage of ethical theory, where it is demonstrated that your child had better be cured. Your act springs directly from desire for an end, together with knowledge of means. This is equally true of all acts, whether good or bad. The ends differ, and the knowledge is more adequate in some cases than in others. But there is no conceivable way of making people do things they do not wish to do. What is possible is to alter their desires by a system of rewards and penalties, among which social approval and disapproval are not the least potent. The question for the legislative moralist is, therefore: How shall this system of rewards and punishments be arranged so as to secure the maximum of what is desired by the legislative authority? If I say that the legislative authority has bad desires, I mean merely that its desires conflict with those of some section of the community to which I belong. Outside human desires there is no moral standard.

Thus, what distinguishes ethics from science is not any special kind of knowledge, but merely desire. The knowledge required in ethics is exactly like the knowledge elsewhere; what is peculiar is that certain ends are desired, and that right conduct is what conduces to them. Of course, if the definition of right conduct is to make a wide appeal, the ends must be such as large sections of mankind desire. If I defined right conduct as that which increases my own income, readers would disagree. The whole effectiveness of any ethical argument lies in its scientific part, i.e. in the proof that one kind of conduct, rather than some other, is a means to an end which is widely desired. I distinguish, however, between ethical argument and ethical education.

The latter consists in strengthening certain desires and weakening others. This is quite a different process, which will be separately discussed at a later stage.

We can now explain more exactly the purport of the definition of the good life with which this chapter began. When I said that the good life consists of love guided by knowledge, the desire which prompted me was the desire to live such a life as far as possible, and to see others living it; and the logical content of the statement is that, in a community where men live in this way, more desires will be satisfied than in one where there is less love or less knowledge. I do not mean that such a life is "virtuous" or that its opposite is "sinful," for these are conceptions which seem to me to have no scientific justification.

MRS. GLENN FRANK *As the wife of a man who was for many years president of the University of Wisconsin, Mrs. Frank had ample opportunity to observe the advantages and disadvantages of fraternities and sororities. In this article, which aroused nation-wide comment when it first appeared in a popular magazine, she tells of her own undergraduate experience. The editors have included this denunciation, not necessarily as a corroboration of their personal views, but because it raises an issue which is becoming acute on many campuses throughout the country.*

HEARTACHE ON THE CAMPUS

A FEW weeks ago at a large middle-western university I talked with a student who had recently been discharged from the army for poor health. The boy said he liked the school, his courses and his professors. There was one thing, however, which he did not like. He had come to the university as a legacy to one of the leading fraternities, but after looking him over the fraternity brothers had not invited him to become a member.

"I guess the war had made me too old," he said, grinning, but for all his nonchalance I could see the hurt in his eyes. He had been cruelly snubbed. Right at the start of his college career he had discovered that the very democracy for which he had fought didn't exist at this great university.

His discovery is not unique. Reports of friction between returning veterans and the Greek-letter societies come from many other colleges and universities supported by taxpayers' money. Young men who have been matured in the hard school of war are finding themselves the victims of a ridiculous and juvenile caste system which is totally un-American. This should not be. It is

"Heartache on the Campus," from the *Woman's Home Companion*, April 1945. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

time for the legislatures of this country to enact stringent laws abolishing both college and high school fraternities and sororities from coast to coast.

To some people that may sound like a strong remedy for a comparatively minor evil in our educational system. But I do not consider it minor.

For more than a quarter of a century, as a sorority woman myself and as the wife of the president of one of our largest state universities, I have had a close-up view of the operations of the Greek-letter societies. What I have seen has convinced me that any good which these societies accomplish is far outweighed by the unhappiness and heartbreak which they inflict upon thousands of young people every year, and by the class-consciousness, religious bigotry and race prejudice which they foment right in those institutions which should be the most liberal. They have no more place in our public educational system than a Hitler youth movement.

Yes, you may say, but if fraternities and sororities should be abolished, wouldn't students organize other cliques and clubs? I admit that they would, but such groups would be formed in a normal natural way. Students would be judged on their merits and find their own level. A boy or girl would not be relegated to a fixed position in campus society during the first days of school, as is provided under smug Panhellenic rules, merely because of the prestige or bank account of his parents, or because of the way he flipped a cigarette or handled a cup of tea.

Only the other day I heard of the case of a dull and unattractive youth who was taken into an exclusive fraternity merely because his father, a rich alumnus, had presented the chapter house with a pine-paneled library; and I know of another case, just as recent, where a brilliant and beautiful girl was kept out of a sorority because her father happened to be a railroad engineer.

"What a pity God couldn't have made him a doctor or a lawyer instead," one of the sorority members said, but, imbued with the snobbery of her group, she voted against the girl just the same.

Such discrimination is the rule rather than the exception and just as often students are casually black-balled because of some trivial or imagined flaw in their appearance, dress or manners. Over and over again I have known of a boy's being rejected by a fraternity because he failed to dance well or wear the latest cut of collar, or of a girl who was made to feel a campus outcast because she was a bit overweight, perhaps, or made the fatal mistake of cutting her lettuce with a knife.

The high school fraternities and sororities are, if anything, even more brutal than the college societies which they imitate because they are unsupervised and they victimize students of an even more impressionable age. Many needless tears are shed and many hearts are broken every year where they flourish. I even know of one adolescent girl who committed suicide because her high school sorority refused to admit her sister to membership.

I realize that in certain places where high school fraternities and sororities have been suppressed by law they have sprung up again in the form of sub-rosa organizations, but this can be prevented by requiring students to sign pledges against joining secret societies as is now done in the Milwaukee

schools. Our main objective, however, should be the college fraternities and sororities. Once they are eradicated, their high school offshoots will wither and die quickly.

The appalling injustice and cruelty of the method by which students are rushed and pledged to fraternities and sororities was first brought home to me through personal experience.

The men of my father's family had for generations attended distinguished colleges and some of them had made distinguished records. My father felt that it was high time that the girls of the family should receive real educations too, and since there wasn't enough money to send me to Vassar, he decided to send me to the university of my home state, Missouri.

Before I left home, two of my mother's best friends said that since they had been Pi Phi's at Missouri they hoped I might become one too, and that they intended to write to the chapter recommending me. This conversation made me a bit apprehensive, but Mother brushed it aside. After all, I was going to the university to get an education, she said, not to become a Pi Phi. What difference did it make whether the sorority asked me or not?

But during my first hours at the university I was made to feel that sororities were the only thing that did matter. Although they represented only a minority of the women students, they had apparently taken over the campus. They were giving teas, luncheons and dinners. They were helping some freshmen to matriculate and escorting others around town in stylish carriages, but only those freshmen, of course, about whom they had received letters. The YWCA was arranging parties for all girls, but no one wanted to go to them.

The big event of the Pi Phi rushing program was an evening party at the chapter house where candidates for pledging were given a final once-over by the members. I shall never forget that party. While stunning girls, gorgeously gowned, looked us over critically, I felt the way a person must feel on his way to the gallows. My pink-dotted mull dress and hair tied with a ribbon were all wrong, I felt, and I knew that one false move, such as spilling my coffee, would bar me forever from Pi Phi. I was frightened and homesick and my throat was parched.

When I got back to my room that night, I wrote to Mother begging her to let me come home. I pleaded homesickness, not daring to tell her that I was a failure—that there was no use in staying on, no use getting an education or anything else, because the Pi Phi's hadn't asked me and apparently weren't going to ask me. Never before or since have I felt so rejected, so hopelessly unattractive.

I started packing, but one afternoon there was a call from the Pi Phi house. Would I come over? I was so excited that I thought my quaking knees would not carry me the several blocks. When I got there, one of the members pinned the Pi Phi's colors on my jumper dress. I was in!

It is impossible for me to put into words the relief which I experienced at that moment. It was like a reprieve from death. If I live to be a hundred, I shall never forget, either, the deep sense of inferiority which I felt during

the period when I thought I was not going to be pledged. Life for me simply wasn't worth living.

All this happened a long time ago, but the heartless and undemocratic methods used in rushing and selecting pledges have not been changed one iota. In 1925, when my husband started his long term of office as president of the University of Wisconsin, I thought I might find conditions there different, because Wisconsin had a reputation for liberality. But I discovered the system there was just as brutal as at Missouri, and it still is.

Every autumn at Wisconsin, as at many colleges, there would come a Sunday which always seemed to me the saddest day of the year. It was the Sunday on which the sororities sent out their invitations. It might be a beautiful fall day, but in boarding houses all over Madison, I knew, hundreds of teenage girls would be waiting tensely for bids which would never come. As dusk fell all hope would die in their hearts and many, many of those youngsters would cry themselves to sleep that night.

I know, moreover, that the injury which is inflicted upon a young student's pride and self-respect when he is turned down by a Greek-letter society is, all too often, a permanent injury.

Not long ago I had a chat with a woman who failed to make a sorority during her stay at Wisconsin and who now lives in a fashionable suburb of Chicago. She has a successful husband, a lovely home and devoted children, but she confessed to me that if a guest in her house mentions colleges she gets up and leaves the room for fear she may be asked what sorority she belongs to.

Yes, and there is the case of Zona Gale. A short time before her death she told me how, more than thirty years before when she was a student at Wisconsin, she had wistfully watched the Delta Gammas starting off on picnics and had wished they would ask her to go with them.

Think of it—Zona Gale! Wisconsin's most famous daughter! Possessed of beauty, character, genius. Winner of the Pulitzer prize and holder of the highest honorary degrees which the university could confer. Yet the old cut of being ignored by the sororities had never healed. It was not vanity. Zona Gale had the least vanity of any woman I have ever known. It was just plain hurt—hurt inflicted by a system which doesn't make sense.

The scars which fraternities and sororities deal out gratuitously to the thousands of students whom they turn down every year are reason enough alone, it seems to me, to condemn them to extinction, but they are guilty of other gross crimes against democracy.

Recently a pretty sorority girl told me that she had been invited to a glee club concert by a brilliant non-fraternity man whom she really liked. Did she accept him? No indeed. Her sorority sisters might have made remarks. Instead, she went to the concert with a nitwit whom she didn't like. He didn't have an idea in his head, but he belonged to a good fraternity and her choice was highly approved.

Once in a sorority or fraternity, a student is compelled to conform to a caste

system whether he approves it or not. If he doesn't join one, on the other hand, he is apt to find himself excluded from leadership in many college activities. Greek-letter students are a minority on most campuses but are so tightly knit and politically organized that they generally control elections.

At Wisconsin, for example, which is typical of most state universities, the highest social honor obtainable is that of being chosen king or queen of the junior prom, but only once since 1925 has a nonfraternity man been elected prom king, and there has been only one prom queen who was not in a sorority.

Some defenders of the fraternity and sorority system contend that this condition is proof positive that nonfraternity and nonsorority students lack inherent aggressiveness and leadership. That is utter bosh.

The most brilliant boy in my class at Missouri, a man who is now known throughout America, was rejected by the fraternities because he was considered countrified, and just a few months ago middle-western newspapers carried long obituaries about another nonfraternity man whom I knew years later. He wasn't considered good enough to enter a fraternity because his mother was guilty of the heinous crime of working for a living. He was good enough, though, to become a well-known lawyer in his state within a few years after leaving college, and to give his life for his country while serving with our air forces in the South Pacific.

No, under the present Panhellenic system, even Abraham Lincoln wouldn't possess leadership enough to make a fraternity, but a brief study of Who's Who in America proves that fraternities have no monopoly on ability. Just as many non-Greeks as Greeks make names for themselves after college.

Even more sinister than the other forms of snobbery is the religious bigotry and race prejudice which fraternities and sororities foster in the minds of the young.

The dean of women at one of our large universities told me only the other day that Catholic girls were admitted to sororities there under a quota system which permitted only a limited number of Catholics to be pledged each year. This quota does not in any way compare with the percentage of Catholic girls at the university. The same system prevails, I know, whether it is admitted or not, at many other colleges and universities.

As for Jewish students, they are excluded generally by leading fraternities and sororities. A few weeks ago I heard of a group of liberal-minded youths in one fraternity at an eastern college who rebelled against this taboo. By threatening to resign all at once the group forced this chapter to pledge a popular Jewish student. That was splendid, but I regret to say it is the only case of the kind I have ever heard of. In most houses, anti-Semitism is almost a part of the ritual.

In self-defense the Jews have formed their own fraternities and sororities, but they have been brutally snubbed year after year by a stuffy faction in Panhellenic which has refused to grant them national charters.

Now why, in a nation which is pouring out its substance to provide equal rights for all people, do we permit a cruel caste system to flourish in our public schools?

One of the reasons, I think, is the attitude of parents.

I knew a woman in Madison who devoted sixteen years of her life, from the time her daughter was born until the child was of college age, to making social contacts which would enable her to get her daughter into an exclusive sorority, and that kind of thing is not uncommon. At a cocktail party recently, I talked with a number of mothers of teen-age children. Almost without exception they were much more concerned about getting their sons and daughters into fraternities and sororities than getting them an education.

Those women were not hopeless snobs. Most of them agreed that fraternities and sororities are unkind and undemocratic. Others deplored the added expense to which they are put—a sorority girl has to be equipped with a wardrobe comparable to that of a society debutante—but, well, since these organizations existed, they naturally wanted their children to belong to the best ones.

This same viewpoint is too often found among college faculty members. Not long ago I received a letter from a professor, famed for his liberal views, in which he asked me to help him get his daughter into a certain sorority. Since the fraternity and sorority system is deeply entrenched, he and many other professors who personally don't approve of it seem to feel that we must have it with us always, like death and taxes.

Such an attitude, it seems to me, is lazy and un-American. This country of ours has had many other deeply entrenched evils in its day, including slavery and inhuman child labor conditions, but we found ways of getting rid of them.

Among the most ardent exponents of the Greek-letter societies are the professional alumni—I've noticed they are often people who have not been very successful since leaving college—who maintain that fraternities and sororities bestow a kind of magical polish upon the boys and girls who belong to them.

That is mostly pure nonsense. During twenty-five years around college, I have never observed that the Greek-letter students acquired any better manners than the others, but if they did it would be a petty gain indeed compared to the dangerous caste ideas they are likely to absorb at the same time.

The only valid argument which the defenders of the system can muster is that the abolition of fraternities and sororities would create a housing shortage at many schools. True, but the problem isn't unsolvable. Why shouldn't state universities buy chapter houses outright and convert them into dormitories run under college management? The total value of chapter houses at both public and private colleges is about \$100,000,000. A sizable sum, yes, but less than we were spending every day to fight a war for democracy. It would be a cheap price to pay for the democratization of education.

The time for this democratization is now. Because of the war, the fraternities are in a weaker position than they have been in a generation. Twenty per cent of all chapters are inactive, and most of the others are depleted in membership. More important, the war veterans who are entering our colleges are bringing with them a more adult point of view than the students of peace years. A man who has learned democracy in foxholes does not mold so easily to the fraternity pattern as a teen-age boy right out of high school.

Recently at one university I talked with a wounded veteran whose viewpoint, I believe, is typical of that of thousands of other servicemen. Because of his unusual heroism in a bloody action in the Pacific, three different fraternities tried to pledge him when he entered college a few months ago, but he turned them all down.

When I asked him why he did so, he said that he considered himself grown up and fraternities childish. Why should he, after what he had been through, scrub a sidewalk with a toothbrush during hell week because some upper classman ordered him to? Why should he let a lot of so-called brothers dictate what girls he might or might not go out with?

Yet we cannot depend upon this attitude of returning servicemen alone to end the fraternity and sorority evil. The Greek-letter societies cannot be laughed out of existence as they deserve to be. They are too deeply rooted. Concerted action by students, parents and educators will be needed before our legislatures can be expected to enact laws abolishing them.

I cannot repeat too often that this should be done right away. On foreign battlefields, a whole generation of American boys of college age jeopardized their lives, and many of them gave their lives, to safeguard democracy. Here at home, the most powerful agency for the preservation of democracy is the public school system from primary grade through university. To make that system wholly worthy of what our boys fought for, we must wipe out fraternities and sororities while the time is ripe!

7. *Research*

JULIA HILTS

SEWARD'S ICEBOX

ON THE evening of March 29, 1867, the Russian minister to the United States, Baron de Stoeckl, hurried to the home of William Henry Seward, Secretary of State, with the momentous news that the Czar had given his consent for the sale of Alaska to the United States. The Baron "suggested that the treaty be concluded the next day at the State Department. The eager Seward pushed away the whist table:

"Seward's Icebox" was submitted as a research paper in a freshman course in English. It is reprinted by permission of the author.

'Why wait till tomorrow, Mr. Stoeckl? Let us make the treaty tonight!'

'But your Department is closed. You have no clerks, and my secretaries are scattered about the town.'

'Never mind that,' responded Seward. 'If you can muster your legation together before midnight, you will find me awaiting you at the Department, which will be open and ready for business.'

So at four o'clock on the morning of March 30, 1867, the treaty was put into final form and signed."¹

Thus the treaty for the sale of Alaska, which Russia had held by right of discovery and occupation, was signed before the public even suspected that the government was considering the matter; and the American people awakened March 30th to find themselves with what they considered the most fabulous of white elephants on their hands. Certainly, there had been "no popular demand for the acquisition of this 'frozen zone,' about which Americans knew little and cared less. The only interest ever displayed in the region was that of a few fishermen on the Pacific coast who requested the government to arrange with Russia for them to have access to the ports and harbors of Russian America, and a small group of Californians who wished to obtain a franchise for engaging in the fur trade."² The people of the United States were at this time totally unaware of Alaska's potentialities. The average American of today knows more about Tibet than the citizen of 1867 knew of Alaska.

"It is not surprising, therefore, that when the American people heard of the transaction—'a dark deed done in the night'—they could scarcely believe their senses. Surprise and ignorance immediately manifested themselves in an outburst of derision and scorn; and for a time the treaty was in danger of being hooted out of court. It was 'an egregious blunder,' a 'bad bargain,' palmed off on 'the silly administration' by the 'shrewd Russians.' Alaska, the land 'of short rations and long twilights,' was 'a barren, worthless, God-forsaken region,' 'a hyperborean solitude,' consisting of nothing but 'walrus-covered icebergs.' It was 'Walrussia,' 'Seward's Folly,' 'Johnson's Polar Bear Garden,' 'Polario,' 'a national icehouse,' 'Seward's Icebox.' The New York *Herald* ran this filler: 'HOW TO MAKE BOTH ENDS MEET—Buy Patagonia, Mr. Seward.' The same newspaper published a fictitious advertisement:

CASH! CASH! CASH!—Cash paid for cast-off territory.
Best price given for old colonies, North or South.
Any impoverished monarchs retiring from the colonization business may find a good purchaser by addressing W. H. S. (Seward), Post Office, Washington, D. C."³

The more facts the public learned, the more pessimistic it became. The proposition had come from the side of Russia, and it appeared that the Czar

¹ T. A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, pp. 398-399.

² John H. Latane and David Wainhouse, *American Foreign Policy*, p. 420.

³ Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

was more anxious to make the deal than was our own State Department. Seward had paid seven million, two hundred thousand dollars in gold, and the average person thought, at that time, that this preposterous sum was being paid for an iceberg. The country was considered to be absolutely worthless by some of the best informed and most influential men in Congress; and even Mr. Shellabarger, a man of great prestige and ability, "opposed the purchase on the ground that it involved an extension of territory dangerous to the existence of the Republic." ⁴

The public's sound Yankee business sense received a yet stronger blow when Russia's position became clear. "Russian America had been for over half a century under the control of a Russian company, which had sub-leased the fur trade to the Hudson's Bay Company." ⁵ The Russian throne always had cherished the fond hope that someday this Russian company would develop into an organization comparable to Britain's great Hudson's Bay, but up until 1867 (the year in which the Russian company's lease expired) the entire enterprise had never yielded a single cent in revenue, and "had plundered the fur resources in such a suicidal fashion that it was facing bankruptcy. Confronted with the unpleasant prospect of having to take over the burdens of the Company, the Czar's advisers remembered that several years earlier certain officials in the United States had shown a mild interest in the possibility of purchasing Alaska. Perhaps it would be possible to capitalize on the friendliness created by the recent visit of the fleets and sell this great liability for a substantial sum." ⁶

There was also the very strong possibility that Alaska was a potential source of trouble with the United States government. "The monopolistic tactics of the Russian American Company were causing an increasing amount of friction with American merchants, thus jeopardizing a valuable friendship." ⁷ Then too, the Americans, always a foolhardy group of colonizers, might simply take over Alaska. There was even the rumor that Brigham Young's following might overrun the territory. "It was obviously the part of wisdom to sell while the selling was good and pocket the money." ⁸

Baron de Stoeckl was much too clever to approach Seward directly with his proposal, so he informed certain intimate friends of the Secretary that Russia might be willing to sell Alaska. Seward immediately contacted Cassius M. Clay, our minister at St. Petersburg. When Clay proposed the subject to the Russian government in February, 1867, Baron de Stoeckl happened to be in St. Petersburg on a visit. When he returned to Washington in March, he brought authority to negotiate the sale. The Baron proposed ten million dollars as an adequate price; Seward offered five; they compromised on seven million. "It then appeared that the Russian American Company had certain interests which would have to be taken into consideration. Seward finally

⁴ J. W. Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution*, p. 300.

⁵ Latane and Wainhouse, *loc. cit.*

⁶ Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 397.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

⁸ Bailey, *loc. cit.*

offered \$7,200,000 provided Russia would assume these liabilities and give the United States a free title."⁹

In spite of these criticisms, Seward had, even then before history had vindicated his purchase, many points in his favor. A man of great vision, the first to actually appreciate America's Pacific destiny, he "repeatedly and emphatically put himself on record as an expansionist of hemispheric voracity."¹⁰ As early as 1846 he wrote:

Our population is destined to roll its resistless waves to the icy barriers of the north, and to encounter oriental civilization on the shores of the Pacific.¹¹

Then again, on June 24, 1867, he declared in a speech delivered at Boston:

Give me only this assurance, that there never be an unlawful resistance by an armed force to the . . . United States, and give me fifty, forty, thirty more years of life, and I will engage to give you the possession of the American continent and the control of the world.¹²

The purchase of Russian America, momentous as it was, was only a detail in Seward's conception of the potential development of America. "Seward also had designs on Hawaii, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Canada, Sweden's St. Bartholomew's Island (West Indies), and, if we may believe his enemies, on Greenland, Iceland, and a part of China."¹³

Seward had another very sound reason for pressing the Alaska issue, which he could not very well shout from the house-tops, as the feeling between the two governments was most amicable at the time. "It was this: the United States would in this way and at a comparatively small cost rid herself forever of any danger of Russian colonization on the North American continent, and of the danger of any complications between Russia and Great Britain upon this continent. This was a most important political consideration, one which much overbalanced the price paid for the territory and the cost of its administration."¹⁴ "That acute observer of political opinion, Mr. Blaine, affirmed that a like offer from any other European government would most probably have been declined."¹⁵

The petty jealousies of the two Houses were not the only obstacles met by Seward in getting the bill through, however. Indeed, at one time the opposition was so strong that it seemed inevitable that Seward would have to risk Russia's friendship by withdrawing America's offer. But Seward, realizing that the loudest opposition came from those who knew little or nothing about Alaska, did not give up; he conceived the brilliant scheme of educating the people. The press published a number of letters which he had received from influential men favoring the plan, and hearing that the opposition was using the same arguments that had been used against "the acquisition of Louisiana, he sent a clerk to New York to copy material from the newspapers of 1803, which in turn the daily press of 1867 published. So successful were Seward's

⁹ Latane & Wainhouse, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰ Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

¹¹ Bailey, *loc. cit.*

¹² Bailey, *loc. cit.*

¹³ Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

¹⁴ Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

efforts in marshaling public opinion for the treaty that charges of bribery were brought against him. He later testified, however, that he had spent only \$500 in his 'campaign of education.'"¹⁶

"A remarkable fact, which aroused suspicion at the time, was that this appropriation was put through by the chief enemies of the administration and the leaders of the impeachment movement. General Banks was chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House, and Thaddeus Stevens was chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, while John W. Forney, whose papers, the *Washington Chronicle* and the *Philadelphia Press*, attacked the President with such vehemence that he had to resign the position of secretary of the Senate, was at the same time strongly supporting the Alaska purchase."¹⁷ It was discovered that the full \$7,200,000 was not sent to Russia, and the House ordered that an investigation be made. The report, however, proved nothing and the matter was dropped. Seward was called before the Committee and, while answering with apparent frankness, some of his replies showed a New York lawyer's cunning. When asked if *any* source had been given in the form of presents to promote the purchase, he slyly replied, "On the contrary, I have knowledge that no fund at *the State Department* went to subsidize any press anywhere."¹⁸

A clue to what actually took place may be found in a memorandum in the President's own handwriting, found among the Johnson papers in the Library of Congress by the late Professor Dunning:

On the Sept. Sunday 1868 Mr. Seward and myself rode out some seven or eight miles on the Road, leading to Malsboro Md—near place called old fields, we drove out into a shady grove of oak trees—While there taking some refreshment, in the current of conversation on various subjects, the secretary asked the question if it had ever occurred to me how few members there were in Congress whose actions were entirely above and beyond pecuniary influence. I replied that I had never attempted to reduce it to an accurate calculation, but regretted to confess that there was a much smaller number exempt than at one period of life I had supposed them to be—He then stated you remember that the appropriation of the seven \$ million for the payment of Alaska to the Russian Govnt was hung up or brought to a dead lock in the H of Reps—While the appropriation was thus delayed the Russian minister stated to me that John W Forney stated to him that he needed \$30,000 that he had lost \$40,000, by a faithless friend and that he wanted the \$30,000 in gold—That there was no chance of the appropriation passing the House of Reps without certain influence was brought to bear in its favor—The \$30,000 was paid hence the advocacy of the appropriation in the *Chronicle* . . . He also stated that \$20,000 was paid to R. J. Walker and F. P. Stanton for their services . . . N. P. Banks Chairman of the Committee on foreign relations \$8000, and that the incorruptable Thaddeus Stevens received as his "sop" the moderate sum of \$10,000 . . . All these sums were paid by the Russian minister directly and indirectly to the respective parties to secure appropriation of the money the Govnt had stiputed to pay the Russian Govnt in solemn treaty which had been ratified by both govnts . . . Banks and Stevens was understood to be the counsel

¹⁶ Bailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 399-400.

¹⁷ Latane & Wainhouse, *op. cit.*, pp. 421-422.

¹⁸ Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 402.

for a claim against the Russian Govnt for Arms which had been furnished by some of our citizens . . . known as the Perkins Claim. . . . Hence a fee for their influence in favor of the appropriation &c. . . . Banks was chairman of the committee on foreign retions.¹⁹

In spite of his quaint spelling and sentence structure, Johnson puts his point across. It does not agree with Seward's testimony before the Committee, but it is quite possible that he hesitated to put facts on record which he only knew of through third parties. Then, too, it must be remembered that Johnson was writing about his worst enemies, the men who tried to impeach him, so the memorandum should be used with discretion.

Fundamentally, the American people appear to have accepted Seward's treaty because it was demonstrated to them that Alaska was worth the money. Yankee love for a bargain and a highly developed speculative instinct were not to be denied.

Bret Harte caught the spirit:

'T ain't so very mean a trade,
When the land is all surveyed.
There's a right smart chance for fur-chase
All along this recent purchase,
And unless the stories fail,
Every fish from cod to whale;
Rocks, too; mebbe quartz; let's see—
'T would be strange if there should be,—
Seems I've heered such stories told:
Eh!—why bless us,—yes, it's gold!

"Harte was right. There are few today who on economic grounds at least, will accuse Seward of folly in having bought this princely domain for one and nineteen-twentieth cents an acre."²⁰ Alaska's resources are fabulous: Nome alone, in one hundred days during 1906, produced \$7,500,000 in gold. This alone would have paid for the territory. "In round figures, fish and fur have brought in nearly a billion dollars to the United States, and metal mines of Alaska, another half billion. The twenty-one million acres of coal lands in Alaska, picked up on the international bargain counter at something like two cents per acre, hold enough coal (as estimated by the U. S. Geological Survey) to keep Uncle Sam's furnace running for full 300 years, at the present national rate of consumption."²¹

Only since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor have we appreciated the strategic value of Alaska. Americans have always had the mistaken notion that the shortest route to Asia was by way of Hawaii. Leaving from Seattle, going by way of Hawaii, the distance is 6,300 miles; going from Seattle, via Alaska, it is only 4,900 miles. "The late Brigadier General William ('Billy') Mitchell, whose predictions on the crucial wartime importance of the airplane are now being validated, once declared: 'The United States is in a better position than

¹⁹ Latane & Wainhouse, *op. cit.*, pp. 422-424.

²⁰ Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

²¹ Mary L. Davis, *Uncle Sam's Attic*, pp. 390-391.

Japan to prosecute an offensive campaign by air. . . . An aerial campaign against Japan could be pushed to best advantage from Alaskan air bases.'"²² The Aleutians are now considered to be the greatest chain of potential island bases in the world.

Such is "Seward's Icebox," "Johnson's Polar Bear Garden." The white elephant that the surprised American public found on its hands that March morning in 1867 has (much like Dumbo) grown up to be the Pride and Joy of its fond owners.

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²² Jean Potter, *Alaska Under Arms*, pp. 12-13.

IDEAS

EDITORS' NOTE

In choosing the essays that follow, grouped in recognizable units, we have had no axe to grind, no virtue to inculcate, no message to transmit, no theory to expound. There has been enough of that.

Instead, we thought back to the years that are blessedly yours. We have attempted to present as many facets of life as could be crowded within these narrow limits, hoping that a phrase here and a thought there will mean something to you. In the loneliness that none of us can escape at times, it means a great deal to make friends with those few who are able to tell us about themselves, or about their work or their dreams and what they have learned.

Some of these people we have known for a long time. Their books are on our shelves. What they have had to say has become part of us and has given us an increased awareness of ourselves and of the world in which we live. They have helped us more than many of the people we see every day.

Others were new to us. We made their acquaintance while gathering material for this volume. Some of them are very young, only a few years older than yourselves. These more recent friends have helped us, in their way, to understand things a little better.

In the first two groups that follow, the writers have illumined the environment, physical or historical or educational, which is called the American scene. In the mirror of their experience you will be able to see more clearly a panorama which extends beyond your own.

Those in the third group have offered the fruits of contemplation for your consideration. That you may not always agree with these opinions does not impair the value of the mental challenge. The last group of writers may help you to evaluate yourself and your way of living by revealing the points of view and folkways of other peoples.

We have enjoyed this reunion with old friends and the pleasure of greeting the new ones. We hope that you will share that pleasure.

1. *Backgrounds*

THOMAS SANCTON *is a native of New Orleans, where he began writing as a reporter on the Times-Picayune. To re-create one's own adolescence is no easy task, as anyone who has made the attempt can testify. It is that troubled period of life to which John Keats refers in the preface to Endymion. But there is no bitterness in the picture which the author gives us of a summer camp in Louisiana. Even the most casual reader will recognize that the sharply defined images and the wealth of concrete detail contribute as much to its effectiveness as does the sympathetic understanding of a boy's mind and emotions. He will also recognize the complete absence of facile satire. The essay will be included in a book on which Mr. Sancton is now at work.*

THE SILVER HORN

THE SCENE is a Boy Scout summer camp, thickly grown with pines and cypress. There is a row of green clapboard cabins, with clean floors and neat double-decker bunks; there is an open field and a flag hanging still in the heavy air; and at the field's edge the land drops down a little to the dark water of a bayou. I spent five summers here, from the time I was twelve until I entered college. I did my first real living and my first real thinking in this camp.

And I think of it now. Like some reader of a long novel who turns back through the pages to find a forgotten part of the plot, and who comes with a flash of recognition across old scenes and dialogues, and characters who have gone out of the narrative but whose personalities and substance once filled pages and pages, I have gone turning back through the pages of my life. When was it and where was it—I have been asking—that I first began to believe what I now believe about the Southern world I left not many years ago, about Negroes, about democracy, about America, about life and death, about men and all their curious fates? This search has been long and turning. Often it has led me back to the years of my early teens and to the summers I spent in the camp.

I was born to the sidewalks and asphalt of the largest city and the widest street in the South. In New Orleans, broad Canal Street was never empty of speeding automobiles and streetcars, even late at night, and of people walk-

"The Silver Horn," from *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1944. Reprinted by permission of the author.

ing by, their footsteps echoing on the sidewalk. But here on the bayou another world existed. In the morning it was the strange, thin call of a bugle that broke into our sleep. Almost before we were awake we could smell the wet exercise field and the forest. Birds popped from tree to tree, plump and colorful, bluejays, mockingbirds, cardinals, flickers—Audubon had painted in these woods. Rabbits ran into the bushes. Snakes we had no fear of, long thick blue racers and speckled king snakes, slid through the weeds at our approach.

Standing in the wet grass, still yawning and sleepy, we took the morning exercises. Night chill was in the air, but behind our backs the sun was rising, and its warmth crept onto our shoulders. After the exercises we raced along a wagon road to the swimming pool, and as we ran up, shouting and excited, two or three startled frogs made tremendous leaps and plumped beneath the glassy surface of the water. After the swim we dried our skinny sunburned bodies and ran to the mess hall.

Most of us in the camp were poor boys, or boys who were almost poor. It was not a welfare camp, but the fees were low, less than a dollar a day for a camper. As a consequence it was filled with boys from modest New Orleans neighborhoods and also from the tough ones. There was always a smattering of the democratic rich: the son of the traction company president came every summer. So did his cousin from Texas, a wild, hard towhead with plenty of money and the soul of a true picaroon. He fascinated and dominated the rest of us. He was the first colorful outlaw I ever knew. But most of the well-to-do families sent their boys to camps in the Maine woods or the North Carolina mountains. Our camp was only forty miles from the city. Department store clerks, streetcar motormen, little grocers could afford the fees.

We had no saddle horses, no golf course, and only a weed-grown tennis court which no one used. For diversion we fell back on nature. In the morning we performed a work detail, cutting a patch of weeds or hauling dirt in wheelbarrows to mend a road. After this we were free to swim, to paddle on the bayou in slender little Louisiana boats called pirogues, to fish for the boisterous black bass and yellow perch and fat blue catfish, and to work for our Boy Scout medals and merit badges, tracking through the grassy cut-over pine lands, cooking dough and bacon on sweet-gum spits, bandaging one another with first-aid splints.

These little medals and bits of colored ribbon meant a great deal to us. We wrote home enthusiastic letters about our progress, describing in detail how we had passed the tests, forwarding the comments of some eighteen-year-old camp officer as though it really mattered. Our parents, most of whom did not have very big events happening in their own lives, were just as eager and simple-hearted about these things, and one or two of the fathers were foolishly ambitious to have their sons win the highest number of merit badges in the area.

Little things that happened during these years seemed of great importance. I remember that in my first year at camp I wore an ill-fitting Boy Scout hat. One of the councillors, a boy five years my senior who seemed to me to belong already to the grown-up world of brilliance and authority, began, in a pleasant way, to tease me about the hat. Every morning for a week he led us to the

abandoned logging road and clocked us as we walked and trotted a measured mile. My hat was anchored down by a heavy chin strap; it flopped and sailed about my head as I ran to the finish line. The boy began to laugh at me. He waved his arms and called out, "Come on, you rookie!" The other kids took it up and Rookie became my first nickname. I loved it. I tingled when someone called it out. I painted it on my belt, carved it in my packing case, inked it into my hatband, and began to sign it to my letters home. Years later when we were grown I knew this camp officer again. The gap between our ages had vanished and in real life now he seemed to me a rather colorless young lawyer. He did not remember about the hat.

At mealtime we ate ravenously in the mess hall. There were steaming platters of pork and beans and cabbage and stew. As we walked to the long clapboard building with our hair freshly combed and water glistening on our faces, which we washed at the flowing pipe of a big artesian well, we existed in a transport of driving hunger. In the steamy fragrance of the mess hall we set up a clatter of knives and forks and china, and afterward we went to our cabins and flopped on the bunks in a state of drowsy satisfaction. Somehow, fat never formed on our skinny frames. We ran too much. We paddled in the boats. We swam. We cut firewood and played softball after supper. When there was nothing else to do we climbed in the rafters of our cabins, trying to invent complicated monkey swings that no one else could do. Every year some campers broke their arms.

2

A giant Negro named Joe did the camp's heavy work. He cut and trimmed the big trees, dug the deep post holes, mixed the cement, cleaned out the underbrush. His strength was a never-ending fascination for the rest of us. Joe was a light-eyed Negro, with a tan cast of skin and a huge bald dome of a head. One of his grandparents must certainly have been a white man. He lived half a mile down the bayou with his large and hazily defined family, in an old "plantation house."

Actually it was not, and never had been, a pretentious place, and I do not know what kind of plantation could have been there. The ground round it was alternately sandy and swampy and there are no plantations where pine trees grow. Pines mean sandy land. In slave days the Negroes had boiled Southern history down to a couplet:

Cain't make a living on sandy lan'—
Ruther be a nigger den a po' white man.

Joe's place stood on a cleared bend in the bayou. The weatherboards and shingles were green with age. The house rested on high slender pillars and there were patches of bright red brick where the covering mortar had fallen away. The yard was shaded by two enormous water oaks, hung with gray Spanish moss, and an iron kettle stood beneath the trees where women did the washing. At the bank of the bayou five or six towering cypress trees leaned

heavily toward the water, for the slow currents of a century had washed their roots completely bare of soil. To get a new anchorage on the land the trees had sent out a forest of gnarled roots and stubby knees along the shoreline. The house seemed beautiful and somber in these surroundings as we paddled past it on our expeditions down the bayou to the lake.

Obviously a white man had built this place long ago, and if he had not been a plantation owner, he had at least been a man of substance. Perhaps this had been the summer home for some wealthy old New Orleans Frenchman in years gone by. Sometimes the camp officers spoke of Joe as "caretaker" on the place. But that was hardly possible. He and his family inhabited every room; chickens roamed freely, and washing hung on lines stretched across the wide porch. It was clear to us that the Negro giant was no caretaker here. He possessed this place, to have and to hold. How he got it and why we never asked him; and his presence there did not seem a very curious thing to us. Already a dark, subjective understanding of Louisiana's history was in our blood and bones.

Joe smoked strong cigarettes and chewed tobacco. His teeth were rotted stumps. We delighted in bringing him supplies of smokes from the nearby town on Saturdays to win his quick and genuine appreciation. There were two or three measures of a Cajun French ditty he used to sing, dancing and stomping the ground, waving his hat and swaying his heavy shoulders with real grace. The words and the stomping finished together, with two hard accents. He would do this every time in exchange for a gift. Yet he did it in such a way that we knew always that this was nothing more than a grown-up man doing monkey-shines for children. He enjoyed making us laugh. There was nothing servile about it.

He got to be one of the people I liked best of all—not only in the camp but in my whole circumscribed world. I liked Joe very simply because he was a nice man. He recognized me every year when I returned to the camp, and after the second or third year I could tell that he considered me a real friend and was glad to have me back. We talked together often, equally and easily, and when I was sixteen and seventeen and by then a councillor in the camp, Joe would do me the honor of becoming quite serious with me and of placing our whole friendship on a mature plane. I do not remember many of the things we talked about, but I do remember that a conversation with him was a reassurance and a satisfaction; that it was always good to find him walking on the road and to fall in with him.

I saw a brief notice in the paper, some years after I had stopped going to the camp, that Joe had died of blood poisoning in the New Orleans Charity Hospital. I thought of those stumps of teeth, and of the many years they had been seeping infection into his system. I thought also of the tall trees I had seen him fell, and that now Joe too had come toppling to the earth. And, though I felt a quiet sorrow, I felt no anguish. Life grew rank and lush along the bayou. His old house was teeming with the spawn of his years. The sun would beat upon the water forever, the trout would break the surface, the

rushes would grow thick and green. Joe had done his share of hauling and of digging. Now he could lie down in the warm and sun-drenched earth and sleep.

3

During those summers in camp a love grew up in me for the rhythms of nature, for tropical rains that came sweeping through the pines and oaks, for the fiery midday sun, for long evenings, and the deep black nights. Great campfires were lit beside the bayou and a rushing column of luminous smoke and sparks ascended to the cypress trees. Fire gleamed in the water where bass were sleeping in the stumps. Campers wandered toward the meeting place, their flashlights swinging in the woods. We sat about the fire, singing, beating deep rumbling tom-toms made of hollowed oak logs, performing an ageless repertoire of skits and mimicry. And after these sessions one leader took the Protestant boys and another the Catholics and, standing in the open fields, in our separate groups, we prayed aloud.

My heart had strayed already from the formal, repetitious praying. A towering pine tree at the field's edge made a silhouette in the starry sky. I knew the constellations, the Giant, the Dipper, the Bear. I looked for the two inseparable stars, Misar and Alcar, horse and rider, and sensed the fact that Arabs named these stars a thousand years before me, and even in my boy's ignorance I felt aware of man's long and varied time upon the earth. I knew this night-filled wilderness had stretched beneath these stars for endless ages before Frenchmen had come in boats to build New Orleans. I thought of the Indians who had fished and hunted here, whose bones and broken pottery we sometimes found in grassy mounds. I felt worshipful of the earth, the pine tree, the night itself.

Sometimes we packed provisions and tents and mosquito bars and paddled down the bayou to the lake, ten miles away. The lake was a great inland finger of the Gulf of Mexico, twenty miles long, ten wide. Twenty miles below us, in prehistoric times, the mouth of the Mississippi river had built up new land, and these watery prairies had pinched off the small inland gulf and made a lake of it, but it connected still through a series of passes with the Mexican Gulf. The lake teemed with croakers, catfish, shrimp, and big blue-clawed crabs. At the northern end, where we camped, a network of tributary bayous emptied into the lake. For the last mile or so of their crooked lengths, where the brackish water of the lake crept into the slow-moving bayous, fish and small life were abundant, bass fed in the rushes, and muskrats built their cities of the plains.

There was a relatively high, sandy point near the mouth of the bayou, where we camped. The sun went down red into the lake and left a long, clear twilight. A few stars came out. A salty wind blew in from the Mexican Gulf; it came out of the south every night. The breeze swept over the rushes and made small waves break on the sandy, grassy shore. There was a red beacon light on weather-beaten piles out in the lake and its long reflection shimmered in the water. We sprayed our mosquito netting with citronella and built up

a driftwood fire and lay down on canvas bedrolls spread upon the thin, tough grass and sand. The trade wind blew through our tents throughout the night. We listened to the waves. We could smell the vast salt marshes far below us. A yellow moon came out of the gulf. Far down the lake we could see the lights of a railroad bridge. We felt the beauty of this wilderness like a hunger.

After two days of fishing and swimming in the lake, our shoulders and faces darker from the sun, we paddled back up the winding bayou.

4

One summer when I was sixteen a party of us, paddling upstream to buy some candy at a crossroads store, came upon three young girls who were bathing in a sandy cove. There were four of us in the long pirogue, all of an age. For a long moment we were speechless. At last we said hello, and they answered in warm gay voices. We drifted the boat into the cove and began to speak to them. Two of the girls were sisters. The three of them had come to visit a relative who kept a fine summer lodge in the woods across the bayou from the camp. One of the sisters was fifteen and the others were seventeen. They were aglow with fresh and slender beauty, and their bathing suits were bright flags of color. Their impact upon us was overwhelming. We grew silly, tongue-tied, said foolish things we did not mean to say, shoved one another about in the boat, and finally overturned it. The loreleis laughed musical little laughs. They seemed unbearably beautiful. We had no idea what to do about it.

The girls had been at the lodge for a week. They missed their beaux in New Orleans, they missed the dating and the dancing and the music. It was a gay town in the summertime. The older girls looked upon us as children; but still—they must have reflected—we were not such children at that. The younger sister, a slender child with thick brown hair and heavily crimsoned lips, sat on the bank and regarded us with a happy open face.

At last we took courage and asked if we could call on them that night. "Oh, yes!" they cried eagerly. Life at that moment was dazzling.

Making this rendezvous was an impulsive thing to do, for it was midweek and we should have to steal away after taps and walk down a path without flashlights through a snake-infested lowland and—because the boats were counted and chained at nightfall—swim across the bayou, holding our clothes above our heads.

We crept from our cabins at ten o'clock that night and met in the pine woods. One of us intoned a counting-out rhyme; the loser had to walk first down the path through the snake hole. He cut a long gum sapling and rattled it down the path ahead of us. We walked bunched tightly together, tense with fear, giggling at our own unbelievable audacity, trembling in our eagerness. At the bayou's edge we slipped out of our shorts and shirts and sneakers and, holding them above our heads with one hand, we felt our way round the knees and along the sunken roots of a cypress tree, and pushed off into the bayou and began to swim.

The moon had not yet risen. We had only the silhouettes of trees to guide us. We swam closely together, cautioning one another to silence, bursting into convulsive squeals as water lilies brushed against our bodies or when a fish broke the surface near us. We swam upstream from the camp, past two bends, and waded from the water in the cove where we had met the girls. Now we were laughing with relief and excitement, and popping one another on the backsides. We scraped the glistening water from our bodies, dressed, and combed our wet hair and hurried off down the wagon path into the woods. Long ago the cove had been a landing stage for small schooners which came to load pine firewood for New Orleans.

The girls were waiting for us, dressed in bright print cotton dresses and wearing hair ribbons. The soft light gave age and mystery to their youthful shoulders, to their slender bodies; and, like nameless night-blooming vines in the woods about us, they bore a splendid fragrance all their own, a fragrance of youth and cleanliness and fresh cosmetics. They were playing a phonograph on the wide porch of the lodge. This was the summer of Maurice Chevalier's great success in American movies. The little sister sang his song, rolling her eyes, turning out her soft pink lip:

If ze night-ting gail
Cood zing lak you . . .

And she sang another:

. . . you make me feel so grand
I want to hand the world to you.
You seem to understand
Each foolish little dream I'm dreaming, scheme I'm scheming . . .

I was so in love with her I could hardly catch my breath. I was in love with the other sister too, and with their friend. All of the boys were in love with all of the girls; the girls—so they said—had crushes on each of us. Our hearts were afire.

We walked hand in hand down the wagon trail to the cove and built a bonfire. We stretched out on blankets, laughing, singing. We sang the songs that people always sing by rivers and campfires, "There's a Long, Long Trail A-winding," "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi," all the rest. We kissed the girls and they held fast to us. Before this night we had been only boys, holding hands with girls in movies, not quite sure why we pursued them and acted silly. Now, lying beneath the open sky, for the first time we understood the poignance and the beauty of the human heritage.

Every night for two weeks we came to see them. And when they told us good-by the last kiss was as much a discovery as the first, and we knew that love was a thing that could never grow old. After they had gone we would steal from our cabins to sit on the back porch of the camp hospital, on a hill, where we could see the bayou and the cove and the woods where we had found them; and we sat there talking late into the night, like daemon lovers in the ballads of old. I never passed the cove again, even years later when I

would paddle down the bayou fishing, without remembering our meetings with a suddenly racing heart. First love is unforgettable.

5

I had no lessons to do in those summer months of camp life. There was plenty of time to think. I was living a communal life with other boys. Among us were embryonic bullies, scoundrels, cheats, promoters, Babbitts, Christers, and stuffed shirts; and there were also the boys of good heart, the unselfish, the humorous, the courageous, boys who were the salt of the earth, but who, often in their later lives, would be misled and preyed upon and set against one another by the sharp ones. One and all we lived together, ate together, slept together. Our personalities clashed, fermented, or formed amalgams. Sitting together at night in the lamplit cabins, with darkness and towering woods closing in upon us, we had our first grave talks about religion, about death, about sex. The future stretching before us was wide and fathomless. And all about us, in the grass, in the underbrush, in towering summer skies, we beheld the face of nature and the earth's wide harmonies as they had never been revealed in our city lives. At night we could stretch out upon the field, observe the stars, and grasp for the first time the fact that some were vastly deeper in space than others. In our star-study courses we heard phrases like "light years." It began to seep into the consciousness of many of us that a hundred years or the life of an individual had little meaning in the total universe; and from this point some of us began our first gropings after moral philosophy, gropings for a belief that could give the total universe a meaning in our own lives.

There was a bugler in our camp who was the first consummate expert, in any field, that I had known. He had no other talent but his music. He was a good-natured, chubby, curly-headed Italian boy, rather lazy, and when he was not back in the woods practicing his cornet he walked round with a dreamy look, as though our own handicrafts could not possibly be of interest to him.

Paolo had a silver trumpet and he preferred it to the bugle. He wanted to be a great musician. He would take his horn and music back into a pine clearing a quarter of a mile from the camp and all day long we could hear him practicing the runs. He blew the trumpet with a clear, sweet tone. We had supreme confidence as we stood at attention on the parade grounds and the flag came down the creaking flagpole pulley in the late afternoon sunlight, and Paolo stood alone, with everyone watching, and bugled. We were proud of him when visitors came. He had that ability of experts to create a sense of possessiveness in others.

It was at bedtime that Paolo gathered up into his clear, thin music all the ineffable hungering of our awakening lives. At ten o'clock he climbed a high ladder to a life-guard platform we had nailed into the branches of a tall cypress tree beside the bayou. Paolo lived for this moment and, with the whole camp silent and listening below him in the darkness, he blew taps with a soft and ghostly beauty all his own. Somehow the music spoke for us, uttered the

thing we knew but had no words for, set up a wailing in the pine trees of the brevity and splendor of human life. Lying in our bunks in the darkness of the cabin, some of us fell into sleep; but some lay in silence thinking longer, alive to the night, and I was of these.

One night some ten years later I entered a smoke-filled tavern in another city where Paolo was playing in a band. By this time he had made a small reputation as a boy with a hot trumpet. I watched his now older face as he tore through the hot routines. He was tired. The silver horn made noise but, though I knew little about it, I could see that he was not a great jazz musician.

I did not go to see him any more. I wanted to remember Paolo before he had lost something, before any of us had lost it, a kind of innocence. I wanted to remember him in the land of our first discoveries, when he had climbed into a cypress tree to blow his horn, and there was a kind of Gothic night-drench in our lives.

LEE STROUT WHITE *was the pseudonym chosen by E. B. White (b. 1890) and Richard Lee Strout (b. 1898) when they collaborated in writing Farewell to Model T, from which "Farewell, My Lovely" is taken. Mr. White's contribution to American letters is described elsewhere in this volume by Clifton Fadiman. Mr. Strout, a veteran newspaperman, has been on the staff of The Christian Science Monitor since 1921.*

FAREWELL, MY LOVELY!

I SEE by the new Sears Roebuck catalogue that it is still possible to buy an axle for a 1909 Model T Ford, but I am not deceived. The great days have faded, the end is in sight. Only one page in the current catalogue is devoted to parts and accessories for the Model T; yet everyone remembers springtimes when the Ford gadget section was larger than men's clothing, almost as large as household furnishings. The last Model T was built in 1927, and the car is fading from what scholars call the American scene—which is an understatement, because to a few million people who grew up with it, the old Ford practically *was* the American scene.

It was the miracle God had wrought. And it was patently the sort of thing that could only happen once. Mechanically uncanny, it was like nothing that had ever come to the world before. Flourishing industries rose and fell with it. As a vehicle, it was hard-working, commonplace, heroic; and it often seemed to transmit those qualities to the persons who rode in it. My own generation identifies it with Youth, with its gaudy, irretrievable excitements; before it

"Farewell, My Lovely!" Reprinted by permission of *The New Yorker*. Copyright 1936, The F-R. Publishing Corporation.

fades into the mist, I would like to pay it the tribute of the sigh that is not a sob, and set down random entries in a shape somewhat less cumbersome than a Sears Roebuck catalogue.

The Model T was distinguished from all other makes of cars by the fact that its transmission was of a type known as planetary—which was half metaphysics, half sheer friction. Engineers accepted the word “planetary” in its epicyclic sense, but I was always conscious that it also meant “wandering,” “erratic.” Because of the peculiar nature of this planetary element, there was always, in Model T, a certain dull rapport between engine and wheels, and even when the car was in a state known as neutral, it trembled with a deep imperative and tended to inch forward. There was never a moment when the bands were not faintly egging the machine on. In this respect it was like a horse, rolling the bit on its tongue, and country people brought to it the same technique they used with draft animals.

Its most remarkable quality was its rate of acceleration. In its palmy days the Model T could take off faster than anything on the road. The reason was simple. To get under way, you simply hooked the third finger of the right hand around a lever on the steering column, pulled down hard, and shoved your left foot forcibly against the low-speed pedal. These were simple, positive motions; the car responded by lunging forward with a roar. After a few seconds of this turmoil, you took your toe off the pedal, eased up a mite on the throttle, and the car, possessed of only two forward speeds, catapulted directly into high with a series of ugly jerks and was off on its glorious errand. The abruptness of this departure was never equalled in other cars of the period. The human leg was (and still is) incapable of letting in a clutch with anything like the forthright abandon that used to send Model T on its way. Letting in a clutch is a negative, hesitant motion, depending on delicate nervous control; pushing down the Ford pedal was a simple, country motion—an expansive act, which came as natural as kicking an old door to make it budge.

The driver of the old Model T was a man enthroned. The car, with top up, stood seven feet high. The driver sat on top of the gas tank, brooding it with his own body. When he wanted gasoline, he alighted, along with everything else in the front seat; the seat was pulled off, the metal cap unscrewed, and a wooden stick thrust down to sound the liquid in the well. There were always a couple of these sounding sticks kicking around in the ratty sub-cushion regions of a flivver. Refueling was more of a social function then, because the driver had to unbend, whether he wanted to or not. Directly in front of the driver was the windshield—high, uncompromisingly erect. Nobody talked about air resistance, and the four cylinders pushed the car through the atmosphere with a simple disregard of physical law.

There was this about a Model T: the purchaser never regarded his purchase as a complete, finished product. When you bought a Ford, you figured you had a start—a vibrant, spirited framework to which could be screwed an almost limitless assortment of decorative and functional hardware. Driving away

from the agency, hugging the new wheel between your knees, you were already full of creative worry. A Ford was born naked as a baby, and a flourishing industry grew up out of correcting its rare deficiencies and combating its fascinating diseases. Those were the great days of lily-painting. I have been looking at some old Sears Roebuck catalogues, and they bring everything back so clear.

First you bought a Ruby Safety Reflector for the rear, so that your posterior would glow in another car's brilliance. Then you invested thirty-nine cents in some radiator Moto Wings, a popular ornament which gave the Pegasus touch to the machine and did something godlike to the owner. For nine cents you bought a fan-belt guide to keep the belt from slipping off the pulley.

You bought a radiator compound to stop leaks. This was as much a part of everybody's equipment as aspirin tablets are of a medicine cabinet. You bought special oil to prevent chattering, a clamp-on dash light, a patching outfit, a tool box which you bolted to the running board, a sun visor, a steering-column brace to keep the column rigid, and a set of emergency containers for gas, oil, and water—three thin, disc-like cans which reposed in a case on the running board during long, important journeys—red for gas, gray for water, green for oil. It was only a beginning. After the car was about a year old, steps were taken to check the alarming disintegration. (Model T was full of tumors, but they were benign.) A set of anti-rattlers (98c) was a popular panacea. You hooked them on to the gas and spark rods, to the brake pull rod, and to the steering-rod connections. Hood silencers, of black rubber, were applied to the fluttering hood. Shock-absorbers and snubbers gave "complete relaxation." Some people bought rubber pedal pads, to fit over the standard metal pedals. (I didn't like these, I remember.) Persons of a suspicious or pugnacious turn of mind bought a rear-view mirror; but most Model T owners weren't worried by what was coming from behind because they would soon enough see it out in front. They rode in a state of cheerful catalepsy. Quite a large mutinous clique among Ford owners went over to a foot accelerator (you could buy one and screw it to the floor board), but there was a certain madness in these people, because the Model T, just as she stood, had a choice of three foot pedals to push, and there were plenty of moments when both feet were occupied in the routine performance of duty and when the only way to speed up the engine was with the hand throttle.

Gadget bred gadget. Owners not only bought ready-made gadgets, they invented gadgets to meet special needs. I myself drove my car directly from the agency to the blacksmith's, and had the smith affix two enormous iron brackets to the port running board to support an army trunk.

People who owned closed models builded along different lines: they bought ball grip handles for opening doors, window anti-rattlers, and deluxe flower vases of the cut-glass anti-splash type. People with delicate sensibilities garnished their car with a device called the Donna Lee Automobile Disseminator—a porous vase guaranteed, according to Sears, to fill the car with a "faint clean odor of lavender." The gap between open cars and closed cars was not as great then as it is now: for \$11.95, Sears Roebuck converted your touring

car into a sedan and you went forth renewed. One agreeable quality of the old Fords was that they had no bumpers, and their fenders softened and wilted with the years and permitted the driver to squeeze in and out of tight places.

Tires were 30 x 3½, cost about twelve dollars, and punctured readily. Everybody carried a Jiffy patching set, with a nutmeg grater to roughen the tube before the goo was spread on. Everybody was capable of putting on a patch, expected to have to, and did have to.

During my association with Model T's, self-starters were not a prevalent accessory. They were expensive and under suspicion. Your car came equipped with a serviceable crank, and the first thing you learned was how to Get Results. It was a special trick, and until you learned it (usually from another Ford owner, but sometimes by a period of appalling experimentation) you might as well have been winding up an awning. The trick was to leave the ignition switch off, proceed to the animal's head, pull the choke (which was a little wire protruding through the radiator), and give the crank two or three nonchalant upward lifts. Then, whistling as though thinking about something else, you would saunter back to the driver's cabin, turn the ignition on, return to the crank, and this time, catching it on the down stroke, give it a quick spin with plenty of That. If this procedure was followed, the engine almost always responded—first with a few scattered explosions, then with a tumultuous gunfire, which you checked by racing around to the driver's seat and retarding the throttle. Often, if the emergency brake hadn't been pulled all the way back, the car advanced on you the instant the first explosion occurred and you would hold it back by leaning your weight against it. I can still feel my old Ford nuzzling me at the curb, as though looking for an apple in my pocket.

In zero weather, ordinary cranking became an impossibility, except for giants. The oil thickened, and it became necessary to jack up the rear wheels, which, for some planetary reason, eased the throw.

The lore and legend that governed the Ford were boundless. Owners had their own theories about everything; they discussed mutual problems in that wise, infinitely resourceful way old women discuss rheumatism. Exact knowledge was pretty scarce, and often proved less effective than superstition. Dropping a camphor ball into the gas tank was a popular expedient; it seemed to have a tonic effect on both man and machine. There wasn't much to base exact knowledge on. The Ford driver flew blind. He didn't know the temperature of his engine, the speed of his car, the amount of his fuel, or the pressure of his oil (the old Ford lubricated itself by what was amiably described as the "splash system"). A speedometer cost money and was an extra, like a windshield-wiper. The dashboard of the early models was bare save for an ignition key; later models, grown effete, boasted an ammeter which pulsed alarmingly with the throbbing of the car. Under the dash was a box of coils, with vibrators which you adjusted, or thought you adjusted. Whatever the driver learned of his motor, he learned not through instruments but through sudden developments. I remember that the timer was one of the vital

organs about which there was ample doctrine. When everything else had been checked, you "had a look" at the timer. It was an extravagantly odd little device, simple in construction, mysterious in function. It contained a roller, held by a spring, and there were four contact points on the inside of the case against which, many people believed, the roller rolled. I have had a timer apart on a sick Ford many times, but I never really knew what I was up to—I was just showing off before God. There were almost as many schools of thought as there were timers. Some people, when things went wrong, just clenched their teeth and gave the timer a smart crack with a wrench. Other people opened it up and blew on it. There was a school that held that the timer needed large amounts of oil; they fixed it by frequent baptism. And there was a school that was positive it was meant to run dry as a bone; these people were continually taking it off and wiping it. I remember once spitting into a timer; not in anger, but in a spirit of research. You see, the Model T driver moved in the realm of metaphysics. He believed his car could be hexed.

One reason the Ford anatomy was never reduced to an exact science was that, having "fixed" it, the owner couldn't honestly claim that the treatment had brought about the cure. There were too many authenticated cases of Fords fixing themselves—restored naturally to health after a short rest. Farmers soon discovered this, and it fitted nicely with their draft-horse philosophy: "Let 'er cool off and she'll snap into it again."

A Ford owner had Number One Bearing constantly in mind. This bearing, being at the front end of the motor, was the one that always burned out, because the oil didn't reach it when the car was climbing hills. (That's what I was always told, anyway.) The oil used to recede and leave Number One dry as a clam flat; you had to watch that bearing like a hawk. It was like a weak heart—you could hear it start knocking, and that was when you stopped and let her cool off. Try as you would to keep the oil supply right, in the end Number One always went out. "Number One Bearing burned out on me and I had to have her replaced," you would say, wisely; and your companions always had a lot to tell about how to protect and pamper Number One to keep her alive.

Sprinkled not too liberally among the millions of amateur witch doctors who drove Fords and applied their own abominable cures were the heaven-sent mechanics who could really make the car talk. These professionals turned up in undreamed-of spots. One time, on the banks of the Columbia River in Washington, I heard the rear end go out of my Model T when I was trying to whip it up a steep incline onto the deck of a ferry. Something snapped; the car slid backward into the mud. It seemed to me like the end of the trail. But the captain of the ferry, observing the withered remnant, spoke up.

"What's got her?" he asked.

"I guess it's the rear end," I replied, listlessly. The captain leaned over the rail and stared. Then I saw that there was a hunger in his eyes that set him off from other men.

"Tell you what," he said, carelessly, trying to cover up his eagerness, "let's

pull the son of a bitch up onto the boat, and I'll help you fix her while we're going back and forth on the river."

We did just this. All that day I plied between the towns of Pāsko and Kennewick, while the skipper (who had once worked in a Ford garage) directed the amazing work of resetting the bones of my car.

Springtime in the heyday of the Model T was a delirious season. Owning a car was still a major excitement, roads were still wonderful and bad. The Fords were obviously conceived in madness: any car which was capable of going from forward into reverse without any perceptible mechanical hiatus was bound to be a mighty challenging thing to the human imagination. Boys used to veer them off the highway into a level pasture and run wild with them, as though they were cutting up with a girl.

Most everybody used the reverse pedal quite as much as the regular foot brake—it distributed the wear over the bands and wore them all down evenly. That was the big trick, to wear all the bands down evenly, so that the final chattering would be total and the whole unit scream for renewal.

The days were golden, the nights were dim and strange. I still recall with trembling those loud, nocturnal crises when you drew up to a signpost and raced the engine so the lights would be bright enough to read destinations by. I have never been really planetary since. I suppose it's time to say good-bye. Farewell, my lovely!

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK (*b. 1878*), *pastor of the Riverside Church in New York, has continued in the tradition of liberal Protestantism which has given this country so many great figures. The breadth of his liberalism is imprinted upon Twelve Tests of Character (1923), Adventurous Religion (1926), Successful Christian Living (1937), and On Being a Real Person (1944). The following is taken from the last of these.*

WHAT BEING A REAL PERSON MEANS

THE PHRASE "real person" is not to be taken for granted as though its meaning were plain. Certain qualities, such as courage, fortitude, and dependability are clearly called for in a genuine personality, but beneath such virtues is a deep-running psychological process, and the criteria of success in handling it are not superficially obvious.

One reason for this is that personal life is essentially dynamic and is ceaselessly in motion. The common phrase, "building a personality," is a misnomer.

"What Being a Real Person Means," from *On Being a Real Person* by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Published by Harper & Brothers.

Personality is not so much like a structure as like a river—it continuously flows, and to be a person is to be engaged in a perpetual process of becoming.

. . . man knows partly but conceives beside,
 Creeps ever on from fancies to the fact,
 And in this striving, this converting air
 Into a solid he may grasp and use,
 Finds progress, man's distinctive mark alone,
 Not God's, and not the beasts': God is, they are,
 Man partly is and wholly hopes to be.

The tests of successful personal living, therefore, must be caught on the run and they always have a tentative and provisional quality. They are not neatly identical when applied to two persons in different situations or to the same person at different ages. Nevertheless, if one is to think intelligently about being a real person, one must know approximately what is meant.

Concerning one criterion there is common agreement. A real person achieves a high degree of unity within himself. He does not remain split and scattered but gets himself together into wholeness and coherence. As the ten trillion cells of the human body must be well organized to produce a smooth-running physique, so the discrete and often conflicting elements of personal experience, such as reflexes, impulses, desires, emotions, thoughts, and purposes, must be co-ordinated to make an effective personality. All other tests of success in personal living hark back to this—a real person is integrated. Some individuals are like a brush heap, a helter-skelter, miscellaneous pile of twigs and branches; others, like a tree, include the same kind of materials, but are organized into a vital, growing entity. As of the body, so of personality as a whole, the major criterion of success is *e pluribus unum*.

The truth of this is revealed, in the first place, in the process of growing up. There is in the body a basic urge toward wholeness, which is another word for health. The nervous system from the start works at its task of co-ordinating the infant's random movements into system and order, and when at last maturity is reached, deliberate attention can be concentrated on some purpose that commands interest, and the whole organism drawn together into that "acme of integration" which appears in creative work.

At the beginning of this process of growth the infant's observable activity seems to be largely made up of *reflexes*—discontinuous, casual, miscellaneous. These reflexes, however, are never as harum-scarum as they seem, and amid their general randomness there is from the beginning a pattern of regularity. Thus the process of personal synthesis starts early, and if the rudimentary reflexes are compared to notes in the musical scale, tunes are soon heard, intermittent, but indicating that composition has begun.

In the next stage of the maturing life a more inclusive combination occurs. The separate groups of habits are taken possession of by *traits* that marshal and arrange them. Specific modes of adjustment to life appear that characterize the individual so that the growing child now has recognizable peculi-

arities. Between themselves these characteristics are often inconsistent, but they represent areas of increasing synthesis. The various groups of habitual activities are falling under the control of interests, attitudes, dispositions, and sentiments that begin to offer a design for living.

As growth continues, the very conflict between these dissident traits forces a further synthesis. *Selves* appear, each "self" a group of traits fairly consistent within its own range, but differing from, often incongruous with, other "selves" in the same person. There is the "self" one is at home, the "self" one is in the schoolroom, the "self" one is on the athletic field, and later there are the "selves" that diversely appear in business, in the church, on the golf links—each man having, says William James, "as many different social selves as there are distinct *groups* of persons about whose opinion he cares." Often these "multiple selves" are in bitter conflict—Dr. Jekyll against Mr. Hyde—so that, like states that cannot get together under a federal government, they fall apart into disunity and war. Strange and even comical incongruities appear in consequence—

When the enterprising burglar's not a-burgling—
When the cut-throat isn't occupied in crime—
He loves to hear the little brook a-gurgling—
And listen to the merry village chime.

The process of synthesis in many lives halts at this point. From reflexes to habits, from habits to traits, from traits to "multiple selves," the human organism, as an expanding pattern of activity, moves toward integration, but never reaches it, for it is a flying goal. Fully matured personality is, as General Smuts says, the most significant of all forms of integration, "the highest and completest of all wholes," and to achieve it is as difficult as it is significant. The central criterion of successful personal living is somehow to pass from mere "multiple selves" into the poise, balance, and cohesion of a unified personality.

2

The importance of this criterion is emphasized when one considers not only the process of normal growth, but the tragedy of the abnormal and insane. Says Dr. Charles H. Mayo, "Every second hospital bed in the United States is for the mentally afflicted." Add to this number the mentally and emotionally unstable people who have escaped hospitalization but who find life a curse to themselves and make it a burden to their friends, and the resultant weight of human woe due to personal abnormality is immense. Regarding the diverse kinds of insanity, one generalization holds—the personality falls apart, fails to achieve or loses cohesion, and so breaks up under the tension of internal conflict. The instinct of our language in describing unstable persons is correct: they "go to pieces"; they "fly off the handle"; they become "scatter-brained," "crack-brained," "rattle-pated," and "unhinged"; they cease being well-arranged persons and become "deranged"; they lose centrality and wholeness and are "eccentrics" and "crack-pots"; the word "crazy" itself comes from

the French *écrasé*, meaning "broken" or "shattered." To be sure, the insane may draw themselves together around some idea furnishing a pseudo-pattern for their living—as, for example, that they are Caesar or Napoleon—but this false cohesion is arrived at only by splitting off wide areas of the personality and suppressing them. One way or another, the common mark of the insane is loss of a steady, coherent design that organizes the else harum-scarum miscellany of personal experience into sense and order.

The extreme forms of insanity specialists must handle, but each of us deals continually with the underlying problem of a disorganized life. We too go to pieces. The rattled baseball pitcher, the ruffled man badly flurried because he has mislaid a needed paper or a pair of glasses, the hurried person, trying to do something with too great haste and becoming flustered, the overfatigued person unable any longer to hold himself together, the frightened person fallen into a panic, the choleric individual surprised by a burst of temper into loss of self-control—such examples from ordinary life remind us how insecure is our personal integration. We are a highly complex aggregation of many elements, and we easily break up into fragmentariness. A mature and genuine person is a supreme work of art—a symphony, whose constituent factors are noises that by themselves can be raucous and dissonant, and whose glory lies in the way they are put together.

3

The importance of this criterion is further emphasized when we consider that upon our achievement of personal wholeness and unity our happiness depends. "Happiness," says Dr. William H. Sheldon, "is essentially a state of going somewhere, wholeheartedly, one-directionally, without regret or reservation." Certainly, to live a fractional and flustered life, to feel pulled apart and at loose ends, to be all at odds with oneself, is to be unhappy. When, however, even temporarily, life ceases to be thus discordant and becomes "a settled, strong and single wind, that blows one way," the experience is thrilling. To become completely absorbed in an exciting game, to lose oneself under the spell of great drama or music, to have a well-nigh perfectly focused hour of creativity as an artist or of fortunate eloquence as an orator, to find oneself in the thick of a conflict where the whole of oneself goes all out for the sake of a cause deeply believed in, even to forget oneself in the complete enjoyment of uncontrollable laughter—such occasions, when life ceases to be a fraction and becomes an integer, are profoundly satisfying. The basic urge of the human organism is toward wholeness. The primary command of our being is, Get yourself together, and the fundamental sin is to be chaotic and unfocused.

The importance of this fact for happiness is evident when one thinks not alone of radiant hours of relatively complete integration on special occasions, but of the underlying need of serenity on ordinary days. Every human being faces at least three kinds of internal conflict that, left unresolved, spoil tranquillity and banish happiness. For one thing, our desires and ambitions clash

among themselves. We want competing goods that cannot be had together. We wish to travel north and south at the same time, and desiring thus, it may be, two admirable goals, around each of which strong aspirations gather, we confront the danger of a split, dismembered life. A second set of conflicts arises from the collision between powerful urges in ourselves such as sex, pugnacity, and selfishness on one side, and on the other the prohibitions and conventions of society. No social order can allow our egocentric impulses to run amok. From birth we face restraint, reasonable or unreasonable, and this interference with strong emotional urges becomes in adolescence and maturity a cause of such frustration as often tears personal life to shreds. A third set of conflicts arises from the disproportion of our abilities to our ambitions. Ideals of achievement or of character are an inevitable part of the human make-up—pictures of ourselves doing or being something that captures our longing—and when our ability either is or seems to be inadequate for our ambitions, frustration afflicts the balked and thwarted life so that girls jump from fourteen-story windows because they cannot be movie actresses, and men become disillusioned cynics because they cannot resolve the clash between their first-rate desires and their second-rate competence.

While our very constitution, therefore, urges us to get together, and makes happiness dependent on our doing so, life is continually pulling us apart. Wholeness is not simply a matter of remaining sane or of growing up until our various "selves" are merged into a unified life; it involves as well facing constant inner conflicts between competing desires, accommodating potent emotional urges to the restrictions of society, and handling the lure of personal ideals that collide with a dismaying sense of inadequacy. Difficult, however, though it is to save life from fragmentariness, the penalty for failure is terrific—a harassed, distracted life, drawn and quartered, that knows no serenity.

There is an understandable reason, therefore, why in modern psychological parlance the word "integration" has taken the place of the religious word "salvation." No disorganized personality can be put into any situation so fortunate that by itself it will make him happy, while a well-organized personality can confront with astonishingly satisfying results conditions that seem at first insurmountable. A young woman, stricken in childhood by infantile paralysis, is now a cripple, walking with difficulty even when mechanically aided. Yet in a college with two thousand students she is elected president of the athletic association. Many things she cannot do with her body, but what she can do, in a canoe, at archery, at swimming, she does supremely well. Whatever else lies behind her selection by her fellow students as their athletic leader, and, as well, behind her own satisfying handling of that leadership, she obviously is a real person, inwardly well organized and coherent, able to go somewhere wholeheartedly and one-directionally. Without that, no magic in any environment can confer happiness on anyone, and with that, the power to rise above and master adverse environment is often astonishing. With a true feeling for the nub of the matter, one youth exclaimed: "I want to get organized. I shall never be happy again till I'm organized!"

4

The importance of integration as a criterion of successful personal life is further emphasized when we consider the meaning of desirable moral character. No virtue is more universally accepted as a test of good character than trustworthiness. Obviously, however, this virtue is more than "moral" in any ordinary sense of that term. Dependability is possible only in so far as the whole personality achieves a stanch unity that can be counted on. The psychological prerequisites of a reliable man are imperative: he cannot halt the integration of his life at some immature stage; he cannot surrender to internal conflict and live a dispersed and random existence; his impulses, emotions, thoughts, and purposes must not remain mere waifs and strays, nor his multiple selves be so diverse that he is one person today and another tomorrow. "Good old Watson!" said Sherlock Holmes to his friend. "You are the one fixed point in a changing age." A consistent character, so unified that the quality of its responses is predictable, is commonly interpreted in moral terms, but the psychological processes involved are basic and profound. A man of integrity must first of all be well integrated.

Unreliability is the first fruit of all forms of dissociated personality. When the dissociation is caused by alcohol or opiates, we have the erratic behavior of the drunkard or the drug addict. When it is caused by infantilism, we have the eccentric whims and caprices of childishness. When it reaches the state of stark insanity, it ranges over a wide and terrible field of unpredictable reactions. It may even produce personalities so split into two or more "persons" of contrasting quality that one of them does not remember the actions of the other, and no observer can be sure which of them at any time will be in operation. As for the rest of us, we frequently act "out of character." The general pattern of our lives may involve honesty, truthfulness, and similar qualities—but not always. There are wild, erratic elements in us that behave in incalculable ways. Some of our moods, impulses, and desires are nomads, incorrigibly uncivilized by our main design for living. In so far as we are thus disintegrated, we are not dependable.

This is evident even with regard to a virtue like courtesy. Although politeness is supported by some of the strongest motives that play on human life, how common is the person whose courtesy is unreliable! Polite today, morose and uncivil tomorrow; obliging and well-bred in business, crabbed, churlish, and sulky at home; affable with one's so-called "equals," gruff and snobbish with one's servants; a good sportsman on the golf links, an ill-natured jostler in the subway; kindly at church, snarling and peevish in the office; friendly with one's own kind, splenetic and even brutal toward Jews, Negroes, Roman Catholics, Protestants, religious liberals, Fundamentalists, or what not—so unreliable are men even with regard to courtesy. Such inconsistency is never adequately dealt with when treated only as a moral matter. Morality is rooted in psychology; consistency of character is one aspect of a successfully organized personality; integrity is impossible without integration.

In one sense, human nature is happily unpredictable. No one can foresee what may be forthcoming from most unlikely people. When Thomas Edison was seven years old his schoolteacher gave him up as a hopeless case. He heard her tell the inspector that he was "addled," and that it was useless for him longer to attend school. The incalculable possibilities of such a boy are among the chief assets of human nature. Even when character has been corrupted, transformations can occur, opening up futures that cannot be forecast, and this unforeseeable element is one of the glories of personal life. Moreover, even in those whom we count most dependable there is happily a wide range of unpredictability. We cannot tell what new and surprising qualities may yet appear in them. They may be full of unexpected quirks and humors, like a diamond with many facets that surprise and delight us. Indeed, paradoxical though it is, this unpredictability may be one aspect of trustworthiness; to use Shakespeare's lines, we can count upon the fact that

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety.

James M. Barrie describes his official conscious self as hard-headed, practical, and canny, handling day-by-day affairs with prudence and shrewdness; but his other self, whom he calls "M'Connachie," is an impulsive, fantastic, romantic fellow who, when he wishes, takes charge of Barrie and controls his destiny—"M'Connachie is the one who writes the plays." This is not disintegration, but richness and variety of life. In this sense one can share Logan Pearsall Smith's exclamation, "What a bore it is, waking up in the morning always the same person!"

Without contradicting such facts, however, it still is true that predictable character is one of the highest ethical goods. One can tell in advance with what manner of behavior a man with such character will act. He has developed a dependable style. His responses to life are, in their quality, established and well organized; one can count on them; they are not inconstant and vacillating. His various impulses, emotions, desires, and ideas are no mere disparate will-o'-the-wisps, but he has become a whole person, with a unifying pattern of thought and feeling that gives coherence to everything he does. Such men and women are the strength of their friends and the noblest exhibit that human nature gives of itself. In them integration of personality has issued in integrity of character.

5

Were this the whole of the matter the problem would be simpler than it is. Difficult though it be to achieve personal unity, still, if well-organized personality always involved good character, that fact at least would furnish a clear picture of our task. Unfortunately, the situation is more complicated. The alternative to an integrated life that issues in integrity is not necessarily the loose and vagabond living we have been describing. A personality can become powerfully unified on an ethically low level, around unworthy aims. Integrity

is impossible without integration, but integration does not necessarily issue in integrity. Napoleon was not a "good" man, but he was a potent personality with immense capacities for sustained concentration. Someone called him "organized victory." To an extraordinary degree he got himself together, focused his life, achieved centrality in his purposes. Psychologically speaking, he was unusually all of a piece. He illustrates the puzzling difference between a *strong* person and a *good* one.

The importance of this contrast appears in man's natural admiration for firm, hard-driving, one-directional, consolidated persons, even when ethically they have little to commend them. Men like Adolf Hitler, burning glasses that intensely concentrate all the elements of personal life into one fiery purpose, become the idol of millions, although they set the world destructively ablaze. In lesser ways this drift of admiration toward compact, well-organized personality, regardless of its ethical quality, is illustrated in every one of us. Let the saints say what they will, they have a sly liking for strong sinners. All exhibitions of power are fascinating, and in personal life integration is power. The chief rival of goodness is not badness in itself, but the attractive spectacle of lives powerfully organized on low levels. Emily Dickinson may scorn "A hateful, hard, successful face," but that kind of face, if only it be forceful, as in Mussolini's case, exercises a powerful fascination. This drift of admiration is man's instinctive tribute to the fact that whether on one level or another, integration is strength.

The possibility of being psychologically well composed and strong, and at the same time ethically dangerous, or even contemptible, presents life with a serious problem. From birth on, our organism tries to pull itself together. Integration is so imperative a need, happiness is so dependent on it, lack of it so obviously leads to failure, misery, or even madness, that man faces an unavoidable urge, one way or another, to collect himself around some center. If, then, it proves too difficult to achieve this gratifying unity on a high level, man tries it on a low one. Some psychiatrists positively encourage this. Conceiving personality's highest good as psychological integration, no matter how it is achieved, they recommend the organization of life on the most convenient and available level that presents itself. One patient, for example, troubled by powerful animal impulses, had also a sensitive spiritual life involving respect for himself, reverence for others, and religious faith. The psychiatrist told him that unless he stopped bothering about his spiritual life, gave up belief in God, became ethically callous, and exploded his animal impulses, he never could be happy. What the psychiatrist was aiming at is plain. He was being "scientific"; regarding ethical considerations as outside his bailiwick, he conceived his business as helping people to the happiness that integration alone can bring; and he was picking what seemed to him the most available level in that particular life. Such counsel, however, far from solving the problem, merely worsens it. Why should it be supposed that eliminating a man's best, and organizing his life around some egocentric impulse, will bring a satisfying unity? The result of that process is a counterfeit integration, often issuing in the most tragic forms of inner conflict.

While, therefore, integration is a major criterion of successful personal living, integration itself needs a criterion. The fanatic is organized—"the man of one idea, whose world has reference only to his obsession, and whose life is impoverished by its pinpoint focus." One way or another, we desperately need to get order and symmetry into our make-up. In a normal person the drive for that never stops while life lasts. If balked on one level, we try another. If we succeed in centering and collecting ourselves around ethically admirable aims, we present human life at its best. If we fail at that, the alternative is not necessarily a loose and vagrant personality. We may be powerfully integrated psychologically, but organized around aims intellectually trivial and ethically sinister.

Indeed, if we are psychologically normal in even a moderate degree, we *are* getting ourselves together. It is not alone the salvation, but the doom of man that he can and does achieve coherence. Each of us is developing a style, as intimately characteristic of the individual as is the style of an artist or a musician. This style is the subtle, elusive, but nonetheless real result of a progressive organization of life, often half unconscious, around some center or centers, good, bad, or indifferent. It is the aroma from our integration, and it can as readily be evil as good.

Multitudes of people of all moral grades achieve a sufficient degree of compactness so that their organizing principles are clear. Charles Dickens exaggerated the distinctive qualities of such persons, but characters like Uriah Heep, Squeers, Micawber, and Mrs. Jellyby illustrate how many and diverse are the unifying patterns in which personal life can arrange itself. As for St. Francis of Assisi and Julius Caesar, Madame Curie and Beau Brummell, Florence Nightingale and Casanova, all such personalities had sovereign traits that gave their lives a recognizable singleness. Integration as a strictly psychological process can have diverse ethical results. It ambiguously makes great saints and powerful sinners.

6

A possible misunderstanding of the well-integrated life on high levels is involved in the use of descriptive words such as "singleness," "poise," "unity," "compactness," and "serenity." They may suggest a placid life, with all conflicts resolved, but such a picture of powerful and admirable personality is plainly false. The great souls have been inwardly tortured. With more contradictory and potent elements in them to be organized, with more ideas, stronger feelings, more urgent impulses, and more possibilities of diverse action than ordinary men possess, they have been more racked and torn, not less, and far from being placid, they illustrate Sydney Smith's saying: "The meaning of an extraordinary man is that he is eight men in one man."

Wagner was, for the most part, no more serene than a stormy sea. Carlyle suffered such inner mutiny while trying to finish his history of the French Revolution that he said to his wife: "They may twaddle as they like about the miseries of a bad conscience: but I should like to know whether Judas Iscariot was *more* miserable than Thomas Carlyle who never did anything

criminal, so far as he remembered!" Edwin Booth, looking back on a life of pre-eminent success as an actor, said: "Much of my life's struggle has been with myself, and the pain I have endured in overcoming and correcting the evils of my untrained disposition has been very great." Florence Nightingale had a desperate time finding herself, and wrote in her diary, "In my thirty-first year I see nothing desirable but death." Dwight L. Moody said, "I've had more trouble with D. L. Moody than with any other man I know." Beethoven went through perdition with his unruly emotions, and when at last deafness closed in on him his inner struggle is only imperfectly voiced in his exclamation, "If I were only rid of this affliction I could embrace the world! . . . No! I cannot endure it! I will seize fate by the throat; most assuredly it shall not get me wholly down." As for the saints, they all understand Paul, "The good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise. . . . Wretched man that I am!"

To be sure, not all such tormented folk would, in any case, be selected as examples of psychological integration, but they were powerful persons, with a one-directional drive and with sovereign traits that led to sovereign accomplishments. They got themselves together sufficiently to make a concentrated impression on the world. If integration is the high good we have said it is, it cannot mean mere tranquillity, where conflict ceases in an equable and steady calm, but must somehow include the range of fact that such tortured souls reveal. Who of us does not understand the conversation in James M. Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy*? "‘But you must decide!’ Grizel almost screamed. ‘I needna,’ he stammered, ‘till we’re at Tilliedrum. Let’s speak about some other thing.’ She rocked her arms, crying, ‘It is so easy to make up one’s mind.’ ‘It’s easy to you that has just one mind,’ he retorted with spirit, ‘but if you had as many minds as I have—!’”

The key to the solution of this problem lies in the fact that all integration is hierarchical. It involves the domination of some traits and purposes over others, and, like any government, it seldom, if ever, is so consummated as to quiet all dissent. The story runs that Zanchio, King of Navarre, was nicknamed "Tremblant" because his skin would be seen to be all a-quiver as he was being armed for battle. But when his squires tried to make light of the coming danger in order to allay his fears, "You have no perfect knowledge of me," said he, "for if my flesh knew how far my courage will ere-long carry it, it would presently fall into a flat swoone." Such governance of alien elements by a dominant purpose is involved in all well-organized living. While, therefore, integration does mean singleness and unity—life ending, as another put it, not like a broom, in a multitude of small straws, but like a bayonet, in point and power—it cannot be pictured as placidity. It involves not only the harmonizing of conflicts but also the subjugation of revolts. It involves a scale of values, with some supreme value, or complex of associated values, so organizing life that one gladly foregoes lesser aims, and resists contradictory enticements, rather than sacrifice life's chief aim and highest worth. Moreover, it entails not alone the resolving of conflicts, but, when that is impossible, the toleration of conflicts, the candid, objective, sometimes humorous

recognition of them, coupled with steady resolution to put first values first. Men and women, therefore, with a positive "talent for turbulence," have achieved powerfully integrated lives. Seen from the outside, there is nothing vagrant and sprawling about them; they exhibit extraordinary singleness and unity. Experienced from the inside, their lives involve a constant struggle to preserve the hegemony of their dominant aims over their competing motives, doubts, and fears.

This factor in even well-organized lives is revealed in the temporary dis-integrations with which the most steady and poised persons have to deal. Bobby Jones, notable for his coolness on the golf links, said concerning one of his greatest games that he stood in the eighteenth fairway devoutly wishing that his knees would stop knocking together long enough for him to hit the ball. Caruso once delayed for nearly an hour the raising of the curtain at the Metropolitan Opera House because he had an attack of stage fright. John B. Gough, a marvelous orator, remarkable for his self-possession, once said that before each address he always felt, "This is the time when I shall fail." To picture integration, therefore, as a welding process that makes of personality a single, consolidated block, is false. Integration is an affair of psychological government, with all the recurrent dissents, tensions, and revolts to which government, however united and strong, is subject. Writers of biography commonly understate this inner fact about their heroes. They naturally select a few dominant patterns and simplify their portrait by an etcher's art. They present a much more orderly and single-minded individual than actually existed. In all strong characters, when one listens behind the scenes one hears echoes of strife and contention. Nevertheless, far from being at loose ends within themselves, such persons may have achieved a powerful concentration of purpose and drive, and far from being organized on low levels, they may have so identified themselves with some supreme value that their names and their cause are henceforth inseparable.

Indeed, to call integration hierarchical is to use too static a figure. Personality is dynamic; it is a going concern; like a river, its unity consists not in the absence of cross-currents and back-eddies but in its total flow and main direction. A river can have rapids and waterfalls, and still move powerfully one way. While, therefore, there are fortunate dispositions gifted with temperamental calm, whose happiness lies in tranquillity, they alone do not exhaust the meanings of integration. Some happiness is not calm but fierce. So David Livingstone, after costly years of toil and suffering in Africa, doing what most of all he wanted to do, said that he had never made a sacrifice in his life. His experience had been full of struggle, inward and outward. He had buried his wife at Shupanga, crying, "Oh my Mary, my Mary! how often we have longed for a quiet home, since you and I were cast adrift at Kolobeng." The unity of his life consisted not in the resolution and ending of all conflict, but in the toleration of certain inevitable conflicts under the dominance of a controlling purpose. Christ himself cried, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?" and in Gethsemane, "exceeding sorrowful even unto death," he prayed "in an agony" and "his sweat became as it were great drops of blood

falling down upon the ground," but he was, at the very least, a marvelously integrated person.

Personalities, therefore, fall into three general classes. Some never get themselves together; they either fail to grow up into psychological maturity, or they go to pieces under strain. Others do get themselves together but on low ethical levels; they become egocentric; they acquire absorbing devotions—money, prestige, fame, even alcohol—to the pursuit of which they subjugate all their powers; they fall under the spell of some single and unifying aim, concerning which they feel as Frederick the Great felt about glory—"Glory . . . is folly, but it is folly that you cannot shake off, when once you get it fastened upon you." Still others, however, achieve well-organized lives on high levels. They find values supremely worth serving. Their lives become coherent, steady, one-directional. They identify themselves with something greater than themselves, to which they give themselves. They face inner tension and at times vehement struggle in maintaining the chosen pattern of their lives, but they maintain it. They become predictable characters.

7

The process by which real personality is thus attained is inward and spiritual. No environmental changes by themselves can so *push* a personality together as to bring this satisfying wholeness within. The achievement of integration carries one deep into the core of selfhood and suggests some such experience as William James described: "The process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities."

To be sure, fortunate resolutions of inner discord may come through experiences not commonly thought of as religious. William James said of his wife: "She saved me from my *Zerrissenheit* (torn-to-pieces-ness) and gave me back to myself all in one piece." When, however, anyone, starved for lack of such love, asserts that, were a fortunate marriage to befall, he or she would thereby become unified and happy, the personal counselor may well be dubious. In too many homes the possibilities of such love, though richly present, are nullified by some deep-seated individual disintegration. As Novalis said: "Only so far as a man is happily married to himself, is he fit for married life." Fortunate romance and marriage, profoundly desirable as they are, often accentuate the pre-existing *Zerrissenheit*, rather than resolve it. If anyone is to achieve personal wholeness, even so fortunate an environment as a loyal and loving family cannot dispense him from confronting himself in that innermost center whence his basic faiths about life, and his spiritual resources for life, spring.

As for the typical environments of our modern world, even when they are popularly deemed fortunate they disperse and disorganize life rather than collect and unify it. Such is the psychological effect even of our emphasis on individual liberty. In primitive, tribal society, a man was so submerged in the life of his family and clan that individuality hardly existed. Social solidar-

ity was so complete that thinking, feeling, and deciding were for the most part communal functions, and the whole tribe moved together when it moved at all. The break-up of that old cohesive solidarity into our freer societies, with infinitely greater chances for personal self-expression and self-fulfillment, would be regarded by the typical modern as an advance. Obviously, however, it has immeasurably increased the strain upon the individual. In the modern world the individual is thrown back upon himself as never before in history. For his livelihood, for his standing in the community, for his success or failure, for his personal friendships, for his opinions, he is largely on his own.

It is difficult for a Western liberal to imagine a desirable social order that does not preserve and even accentuate such freedom; yet freedom involves, and always will involve, one of the severest tensions that the human organism can sustain. As Thomas Huxley said, "A man's worst difficulties begin when he is able to do as he likes." Our modern society, therefore, even in those freedom-conferring aspects which are acclaimed as a social advance, increases rather than decreases the internal conflicts, confusions, and worries, and makes more difficult, not less, their avoidance or their solution. "Anxiety," said Kierkegaard, "is the dizziness of freedom." The hope of a society that will automatically produce integrated, one-directional, satisfying personality, pushed together by fortunate environment, is utter delusion.

Indeed, nervous prostration is a specialty of the prosperous, and statistics indicate that suicide occurs most frequently among the more well-to-do. Wealth immensely widens the area of individual freedom, and so increasing the multiplicity of possible choices, it often is far more disrupting than satisfying. Granted that "A heavy purse makes a light heart!" Granted that the inequities of our economic disorder deserve the castigation of good men, and that many thwarted lives, distracted, stunted, and crushed, would in a more decent social organization have a chance at worth-while living now denied them! Nevertheless, no financial prosperity by itself can push a personality together, give it centrality and symmetry, lead it up through reflexes, habits, traits, and multiple selves to a united whole, banish from the scene the major areas of inner conflict, and produce a steady and poised man.

It's no in titles nor in rank;
It's no in wealth like Lon'on Bank,
To purchase peace and rest.

Balk at it, as we moderns may, there is no solution of this inner problem of a unified and whole personality unless we come back to the insights of the great religious seers. So one of our modern Quakers puts it:

Strained by the very mad pace of our daily outer burdens, we are further strained by an inward uneasiness, because we have hints that there is a way of life vastly richer and deeper than all this hurried existence, a life of unhurried serenity and peace and power. If only we could slip over into that Center! If only we could find the Silence which is the source of sound! We have seen and known some people who seem to have found this deep Center of living, where the fretful calls

of life are integrated, where No as well as Yes can be said with confidence. We've seen such lives, integrated, unworried by the tangles of close decisions, unhurried, cheery, fresh, positive. These are not people of dallying idleness nor of obviously mooning meditation; they are busy carrying their full load as well as we, but without any chafing of the shoulders with the burden, with quiet joy and springing step. Surrounding the trifles of their daily life is an aura of infinite peace and power and joy. We are so strained and tense, with our burdened lives; they are so poised and at peace.

WALTER BRADFORD CANNON *The eminent position of Dr. Cannon (1871-1945) in the field of physiology is attested by the number of honorary degrees conferred upon him by universities in both America and Europe. For many years, he was a professor in the Harvard Medical School. Most of Dr. Cannon's published works, highly regarded in medical circles, lie beyond the prowess of the layman, but The Wisdom of the Body (1939), from which the following is taken, is an exception.*

THE MARGIN OF SAFETY

IN 1907 Meltzer, in an important and suggestive paper, drew attention to a group of facts which he had gathered to throw light on the question whether our bodies are organized on a generous or on a narrowly limited plan. He pointed out that when an engineer estimates the weights which a bridge or beam must support, or the pressures to which a boiler will be subjected, he does not provide merely for those stresses in building the structure. The engineer multiplies his estimates by three, six or even by twenty, in order to make the structure thoroughly reliable. The greater strength of the material, above that calculated as necessary, measures what is known as a "factor of safety." How are our bodies built? was Meltzer's question. Are they set up with niggardly economy? Is barely enough provision made for keeping us intact? Or is there allowance for contingencies—have safety factors been introduced on which we may count in times of stress?

Already we have become acquainted with some evidence which answers these questions. We have seen that stores of carbohydrate, protein and fat are set aside in the body for use when supplies from the outside are not available. We have learned that although blood sugar is usually kept up to 90 or 100 milligrams per cent, it need not be that high. It can fall to 65 or 70, and sometimes lower, without producing disagreeable symptoms, and, as a rule, only the low level of 45-50 makes serious trouble. If 50 milligrams per cent

"The Margin of Safety," from *The Wisdom of the Body* by Walter B. Cannon. Published by W. W. Norton and Company, Inc.

is taken for the "threshold of adequate supply," as we may call it, or the "deficiency threshold," the margin of safety in blood sugar would be about 100 per cent.

Similar conditions prevail in the control of blood calcium. As we have noted, the normal concentration is about 10 milligrams per cent. Convulsions occur when the concentration is reduced about half; it may be reduced to 6 or 7, however, without danger of trouble. There is approximately the same margin for the calcium percentage as for the sugar percentage in the blood.

2

We have seen indications, too, that in the circulatory apparatus and its functions a large factor of safety is present. Although our normal systolic blood pressure is 110-120 millimeters of mercury, it may drop to 70-80 (i.e., about one-third) before reaching the critical level at which the volume flow to the tissues becomes insufficient. There is clearly a safety margin here. The quick restoration of approximately normal blood pressure, after a large percentage of the estimated blood volume, even up to 30 or 40 per cent, has been withdrawn, shows that the vasomotor apparatus is organized for security. As with other important arrangements in the organism, a series of devices assure the maintenance of an adequate blood flow. The vasomotor center is in the part of the brain (the medulla oblongata) which is nearest the spinal cord. When that is injured or destroyed, subsidiary centers soon assume control. And when they are eliminated, sympathetic ganglia take over the government. Finally, as Bradford Cannon has shown, all sympathetic influences can be excluded and then the vascular wall itself attends to the proper adjustment of the capacity of the vessels to the blood contained within them. Even in this, the last possible stage of reduction, therefore, blood pressure is held nearly up to the usual height.

We have had occasion to observe, also, that the heart is furnished with a large capability of meeting extra demands. Usually it beats at a moderate pace and puts forth a moderate volume of blood. But at any moment it is ready to contract twice as fast, put forth twice the amount of blood per beat, and against an arterial pressure which may be increased 30 or 40 per cent! It is a marvelously capable and adaptable organ, richly endowed with reserves of force.

3

In the respiratory functions, as well as in the circulatory, we find a large safety margin. Disease has proved that life may continue though a great part of the lungs has been destroyed. In some cases of pneumonia the lung on one side may become as solid as the liver without dangerously interfering with the oxygen supply to the body or with the elimination of carbon dioxide. This evidence is supported by the observation that collapse of the lung on one side so that it is no longer ventilated, or actual removal of half the pul-

monary area, is endured without serious difficulty. In the lungs alone, therefore, the factor of safety is at least two.

In addition there is a much larger amount of oxygen transported from the lungs to the tissues than is ordinarily used. As we have previously noted, the blood which leaves the lungs with a load of approximately 18 volumes per cent of oxygen may return, when we are living quietly, still carrying 14 volumes per cent. In the blood, as it flowed past the masses of secluded cells, three and a half times as much oxygen was available as was actually taken for use.

The complex of adaptations which occur after hemorrhage or on ascent into the thin air of high altitudes, or when the oxygen-carrying power of the red corpuscles has been limited by carbon monoxide poisoning—the faster pulse, the increased blood pressure, the discharge of extra corpuscles from the spleen—must also be counted among the safety factors in the organization of the respiratory mechanism.

4

It is a noteworthy fact in the construction of the body that many of its organs are paired. Are both of the paired organs needed for the continued existence and the efficiency of the organism? They are not. One of the two kidneys may be removed—indeed, two-thirds of each kidney may be taken—without serious disturbance of kidney function. The amount and composition of the urinary secretion is practically unchanged. This significant result is probably related to the important observation made by Richards of Philadelphia that at any one time many of the glomeruli of the kidney are not working—a condition which reveals directly a generous provision for special stress.

The safety margin is similar or even larger in other paired organs. The cortex of the adrenal glands is known to be necessary for life. If both glands are excised, death follows, usually within 36 hours. But if only one-tenth of the adrenal tissue is left the existence of the organism is not endangered. Again, the complete extirpation of the thyroid gland results in myxedema, with its lessened metabolism, slow reaction time, dry and thickened skin, and other abnormal consequences. Four-fifths of the thyroid substance, however, may be taken away without the appearance of any of these symptoms. The four small parathyroid glands, as already noted, are of the utmost importance in maintaining the proper calcium concentration in the blood. Their removal results in convulsions, coma and death, unless most skilful and intelligent nursing care is given. Elimination of at least two of the glands, however, is not followed by any perturbation at all.

In the nervous system the greatly elongated conducting cells are quite specially altered from their original, simple, roundish form. The more the cells are modified from this simple form the less capable they are of repro-

ducing themselves. According to present evidence, if any of these long neurones are destroyed, there is no possibility of replacing them by division and growth of neighboring cells, as can be done in the liver, for example, when liver cells are locally killed. Thus, an injury to the nerve cells on the nasal side of the retina could never be repaired; a permanent blind spot would exist in the injured area. It would be compensated for, however, by the functioning of the corresponding lateral or temporal area in the other eye. Indeed, the factor of safety in the paired sense organs is at least two. The same relation holds true for the vagus nerves. Although section of both vagi causes pronounced digestive and respiratory difficulties, and is likely to lead to death in a few days from pneumonia, one nerve can be put out of action without causing any notable disturbance. Likewise severance of one of the great splanchnic nerves, which, like the vagi, distribute impulses over a wide range in the abdominal viscera, causes no observable impairment. In all respects the important functions of the abdominal organs which are concerned continue quite normally.

In view of the concept that nerve cells do not reproduce—that we have only one set of them, and if any are destroyed or injured they cannot be duplicated or repaired—we might suppose that the factor of safety in the brain would be nil. Dandy has reported, however, that when the growth of a tumor has required the operation, he has removed all of the right cerebral hemisphere above the basal ganglia with not only no danger to life but also with no appreciable change in mental characteristics or function. Likewise removal of both frontal lobes of the brain caused no notable effects. The patient was perfectly aware of time, place and person; the memory was unimpaired; he read, wrote, and passed mathematical tests accurately, and in conversation was not distinguishable from a normal individual. Nor was intelligence impaired by excision of the left occipital lobe or the lower half of the left temporal lobe. In fact, consciousness was permanently lost only when the area of the brain supplied by the left anterior cerebral artery was deprived of its blood supply. It is clear, therefore, that, so far as the functions of the brain that subserve conscious activity are concerned, a wide margin of safety has been provided. To be sure, removal of the cerebral hemisphere of one side does result in paralysis of the movements of the limbs of the opposite side of the body, but it does not affect muscles which contract on the two sides simultaneously—for example, the muscles of respiration and swallowing, which are essential for continued existence.

It is noteworthy that the brain and spinal cord, with their elemental duties of coördinating and controlling the activities of the organism, and with their peculiar lack of ability for structural regeneration if damaged, are specially protected by strong bony casings. The skull, though thin, is made of hard bone; and the spinal column, surrounding the spinal cord, though divided into vertebral segments which permit a certain amount of flexibility, is powerfully buttressed by ligaments and by surrounding muscles.

5

More striking, perhaps, than the safety factors in paired organs are those in the unpaired. The pancreas produces the internal secretion, insulin, which is required for the proper utilization of sugar by the organism. Complete removal of the pancreas, as previously noted, causes at once extreme diabetes. But four-fifths of the organ can be extirpated without ill effects; only one-fifth is necessary to furnish the insulin needed by the body.

Another instructive instance is offered by the liver. As Meltzer pointed out, it is an organ having many important functions. It plays a highly significant rôle in the metabolism of carbohydrates, fats and proteins. It protects the internal environment by supplying factors needed in the coagulation of the blood. It changes toxic ammonia compounds into relatively harmless urea. It excretes the pigments resulting from the breakdown of red blood corpuscles. It stands guard and prevents the entrance of metallic poisons from the alimentary canal into the general circulation and thus prevents their distribution throughout the organism. And it may have a central relation to the formation of red blood corpuscles. The liver is the busiest and most versatile organ in the body. Yet three-fourths of the liver can be taken out, and despite the variety and value of the functions which it performs, the loss does not induce symptoms which indicate any serious interference. The hepatic structure is obviously built greatly in excess of the normal requirements.

Again in the alimentary canal we find evidence that our bodily organs are not constructed on a pinched and skimpy scale. In operations for the treatment of disease or accident, most of the stomach has been removed, and yet digestion and nutrition have not been grossly impaired. About ten feet of small intestine have been taken out, and the patient has suffered no considerable ill effects. In many cases most of the large intestine has been cleared away, and the claim has been made that the result has been actually beneficial! It is evident that there is much more of the digestive tract than is needed for carrying on its functions.

One reason why the stomach can be removed without greatly affecting the digestive process is that the pancreatic juice has a ferment which, like that of the gastric juice, is able to split the proteins of the food. This generous duplication of agencies is seen also in the arrangements for digesting starch; the salivary glands and the pancreas both produce starch-splitting ferments. Our six salivary glands, therefore, are not of primary importance for digestion; they can be wholly eliminated without interfering with the nutritive utilization of carbohydrates. And also fat, if finely emulsified (as it is in milk, for example), can be digested and absorbed, even in the absence of the fat-splitting ferment of the pancreatic juice, because there is a similar ferment in the gastric juice capable of attacking emulsified fat. Again we find, therefore, in the construction and workings of the alimentary canal, ample and liberal arrangements for assuring the existence of the organism.

6

Many more instances might be cited to show that the various parts of our bodies are constructed with a wide margin of safety. As Meltzer wrote:

The active tissues of most of the organs exceed greatly what is needed for the normal function of these organs. In some organs the surplus amounts to five, ten or even fifteen times the quantity representing the actual requirement. In the organs of reproduction the superabundance and waste of tissue for the sake of assuring the success of the function is marvelous. Furthermore, the potential energies with which some organs, like the heart, diaphragm, etc., are endowed are very abundant and exceed by far the needs of the activities of normal life. The mechanisms of many functions are doubled and trebled to insure the prompt working of the function. In many instances the function of one organ is assured by the ready assistance afforded by other organs. The continuance of the factors of safety is again protected by the mechanisms of self-repair peculiar to the living organism. We may, then, safely state that the structural provisions of the living organism are not built on the principle of economy. On the contrary, the superabundance of tissues and mechanisms indicates clearly that safety is the goal of the animal organism.

7

The fathers of medicine made use of the expression, the "healing force of nature," the *vis medicatrix naturae*. It indicates, of course, recognition of the fact that processes of repair after injury, and of restoration to health after disease, go on quite independent of any treatment which a physician may give. All that I have done thus far in reviewing the various protective and stabilizing devices of the body is to present a modern interpretation of the natural *vis medicatrix*. As we have seen, there are various ways in which through many years the normal state of the organism is maintained or its disturbed balance reestablished by automatic physiological reactions. The numerous methods which throughout human history have been employed to cure disease, from beating a tom-tom to the royal touch and the use of prayer, have all been justified by the fact that persons who were ill became well under the treatment. Only in recent times have any considerable number of persons been willing to test the efficacy of the natural processes alone and to observe that they are potent factors, working for health. If the body can largely care for itself, however, what is the use of a physician?

In the first place, the well-trained physician is acquainted with the possibilities and limitations of self-regulation and self-repair in the body. He is instructed in that knowledge and employs it not only for his own intelligent action but also as a means of encouragement for the patient who looks to him for counsel. For example, external heat, plus that produced by the working parts, may be so great as to run the body temperature up to a dangerous height—i.e., the adaptive mechanisms may be overwhelmed unless such external aid as the alert physician can give is immediately rendered. Or, to take

another example, great fear, with its attendant internal preparations for struggle, may be serviceable in wild life when the need for physical effort is imminent, but in the circumstances of civilized existence it may be the occasion for baneful disturbance of vitally important functions. These are facts which the informed physician understands and can explain in ways which are helpful and curative.

Again, the physician realizes better than the layman that many of the remarkable capacities of the organism for self-adjustment require *time*—all of the processes of repair belong in that class—and that they can play an important rôle in restoring the organism to efficiency only if they are given the chance which time provides. The wise physician, therefore, insists on conditions which permit only such activities as are necessary until lost or injured parts have been rebuilt, strengthened, or compensated for.

Furthermore, the physician realizes that he has at his command therapeutic agents with which he can support or replace the physiological self-righting or self-protective processes we have been considering. When he gives insulin for diabetes, for instance, he knows that his treatment is serving in a natural manner to perform a natural function which has broken down, and that neither bone setting nor mental therapy can be useful in its place. Or when he gives thyroxin for myxedema or cretinism, again he is aware that he is using a physiological factor for a physiological defect. And antitoxin, he well understands, is a means of helping the defensive reactions which are regularly a part of the body's self-protection. He appreciates the fact, also, that a mode of treatment used on a sick person to restore the normal state is commonly more potent than when used on a well person. Thus, cold applications will reduce a high fever, whereas the same applications will not reduce a normal temperature. Or a dose of thyroxin which will markedly raise a metabolism which is low because of thyroid deficiency will have little or no effect in raising the normal metabolism. Or a given dose of insulin has much greater influence on a severe case of diabetes than it has on a mild case. The physician, then, plays his part in making effective the self-regulating adjustments of the body that have been disordered or that are in need of reinforcement, understanding that, as a rule, nature herself is working with the curative agencies which he applies.

Finally, a great service which the physician renders is that of bringing hope and good cheer to his patients. That alone justifies his presence. He has seen at work in many cases the restorative processes of the organism. In the facts which we have surveyed we have become acquainted with good reasons for extending hope and cheer to the sick, reasons based on the ample evidence that in the body there are admirable devices for maintaining its stability against disturbing internal and external conditions, marvelous provisions for protecting its integrity against foes, both wild beasts and microscopic germs, and very liberal margins of structural strength and functional capacity beyond the ordinary requirements. When we are afflicted and our bodily resources seem low, we should think of these powers of protection and healing which are ready to work for the bodily welfare.

DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE (*b. 1898*) went from Harvard to the Department of Agriculture and then devoted himself to the writing of books, both scholarly and popular, on nature's infinite variety. Mr. Peattie's *An Almanac for Moderns* (1935) won the Limited Editions Club's gold medal as the book, published during a five-year period, most likely to become an American classic. *A Prairie Grove* (1938) records a year spent on one square mile of land near Chicago, where he made more interesting discoveries than many people make in a lifetime of travel. He now lives in a suburb of Santa Barbara, California, where he wrote the autobiographical *The Road of a Naturalist* (1941), from which the following is taken.

SURVIVAL ON THE DESERT

OUR TALL still room, within the coolness of adobe walls two feet thick, was a fortress ringed around by an enemy glare, gold bright in the morning and by noon white gold. The windows, curtained to slits, watched that implacable blaze of space as far as the mountainous horizon, and found no break in it. Only the strict contorted shadows of the Joshua trees, bearded and shaggy prophets bent at every joint with the look of protest against pain. Other trees branch serenely, the white pine in a whorl, the elm in lofty umbrella form, the willow in a deep hospitable V-shape, the oak in natural alternate forks. But Joshua trees take a contorted way to grow, because they can grow in no other.

Every fantastic down-bending, each crazy side thrust, is an escape. There is a weevil whose adults live on the sap of the Joshua, its grubs fattening on the flowers and heart. Such destruction do they cause of the tree's central shoot that the plant, instead of taking a straight upward course like other yuccas, puts forth lateral branches to compensate for the damage. These too the weevil nips and heads off, so that the Joshua tree branches again and again in no predictable way. Even bloom obliges it to grow writhingly, for if a bough flowers, then growth in that bough stops and branching begins there. It is a tree that seems to stand rooted in some inborn torment.

So, cantankerous of outline and stingy of shade, the Joshua is not a very congenial tree to a man. But you make the most of companionship when it is limited. Getting to know and like these yuccas on the desert, I discovered how much there was to find out about them. For the Joshua tree is the Mojave's enigma. No one knows how it is able to attain tree stature on a desert that does not otherwise support trees. No one can tell how old the Joshuas are, for they do not give us true annual rings by which to count their years; instead they produce false concentric rings that prove nothing, and thus conjecture is

"Survival on the Desert," from *The Road of a Naturalist* by Donald Culross Peattie. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.

left to run wild about the age of a giant among them, surmising anything from three hundred to four thousand years, with the first guess the more probable. No one knows when next these trees will unite in a great flowering year, for like all yuccas the Joshua is irregular and spasmodic in blooming. Every year a few bloom; only at infrequent intervals a forest of them comes almost unanimously into heavy white blossom. And finally, lacking fossil evidence, no one knows the Joshua tree's racial antiquity; what grows on the desert returns as dust to dust.

Archaic as they look, Joshua trees are not, I think, a picture of the past, like redwoods and ginkgoes. In their position as quite advanced members of the distinctly progressive Lily family, they more probably foreshadow the forests of the remote future, when the planet may be desiccating, and from plant families not now dominant may emerge a resistant covering of green things adapted to deserts of continental proportions.

Some people do not like this glimpse into the future. The first American to see Joshua trees was John C. Frémont, heading his motley company in 1844 in search of the mythical river of Buenaventura. Where now the desert wind blows a gale every day from noon to midnight around the house corners of the town of Mojave, Frémont came upon a forest of embittered-looking Joshuas, and did not hesitate to pronounce them "the most repulsive trees in the vegetable kingdom."

Clustered in a thin band along the desert bases of the southern Sierra from the lonely Little San Bernardinos blazing far in the south, to the deep Owens Valley with its lost lake in the north, the Joshua trees stood unseen and unadmired for another decade. The Whipple exploring expedition struck the Mojave River from Arizona in 1854, and with it was good old Doctor Bigelow of Boston, botanist, landscape artist, physician hero of the cholera epidemic. He was the first man ever to introduce cheerful planting into cemeteries, and to him the Joshua did not look out of place on earth. He collected its fruits and, getting hold of them, the botanists back East began making up Latin names for that improbable thing out there on the desert.

No one could tell them anything about its flowers, those rare infrequent flowers that must have come before the curious fruits. Another twenty years went by; Doctor C. C. Parry, who found out how much botanical discovery there was to be made on the Mojave which people called a waste, was the scientist first to come on a Joshua tree in flower.

And what flowers, each cluster the size of an ostrich egg, the petals like creamy leather, a quarter of an inch thick! They seem never quite to waken, but from their drowsing, nearly closed lips they exhale an odor no one can be found to praise.

Unless it is the smoky little *Pronuba* moths, who come to the blossoms, mate there, hover and hide and perform small extraordinary rites without which no Joshua tree would stand and brandish arms at heaven. Some sixty years ago the spotlight fell upon *Pronuba*. Let us watch the act. The bull's-eye lantern is in the hand of that cheerful eccentric of a science full of eccentricities, Charles Valentine Riley. He is a young man still, State Entomologist

of Missouri; the *Pronuba* that he is tonight observing is a female. Thoughtless, guided by the sure hand of instinct, her eggs fertile within her, she runs to the top of a stamen of the yucca flower that is her stage, bends its pale-gold, pollen-laden anther down to her, curls her tongue about it to hold it while with her tentacles she scrapes the pollen from it. This she kneads into a pellet with her forelegs, patting it and rolling it, and when it is a ball three times the size of her head, she picks it up between her forelegs and her body and flies away.

The spotlight, an all-seeing eye, follows and finds her on another yucca's flower. Here for a moment she rests. Suddenly she takes a swift exploratory run at the bottom of the flower around the columnar stamens, climbs them, and, backing, straddles two of them. So she raises her tail against the great six-angled pistil which rises gleaming creamy white between the stamens. Then from her tail she thrusts out her ovipositor, a thing as delicate as a thread of silk but sharp as a needle, and sinks it into the pistil. As the egg passes down the ovipositor, into the ovary of the flower, her body quivers. So intense is her preoccupation, so devoted every instinct, that she does not stir when a penknife clears the heavy petals and two of the stamens away, when the light of the lantern blazes more fiercely down on her, and the hand lens is brought gleaming within an inch of her head. Egg after egg she lays, after each occasion running ceremoniously to the bottom of the stamens and once more climbing them. Again and again she carries pollen to the top of the pistil, to its receptive stigmatic surface, cramming it down, forcing it into the pollen chambers with her tongue. The hot light beats upon her; the lens follows wherever she goes; nothing deflects her dutiful industry, the laying of her eggs among the ovules of the flower, on some of which her grubs are to feed. In reciprocity, she has cross-pollinated her children's host. Only by the agency of the *Pronuba* moth can a yucca be sure of setting seed.

This night's work, carefully recorded in Riley's now famous pocket notebooks, established the complete symbiosis, or mutual dependence, between yucca and *Pronuba*. The Joshua tree has other intimate associates. I found one such, a quick-dodging, splay-footed wriggle more tail than lizard, when I ripped open a half-rotted branch fallen upon the ground. There, or under the Joshua's bark, or deep down at the base of its daggerlike leaves, these night lizards lurk by day, and they are never far from Joshua trees o' nights. For they live on termites, and the termites live on the Joshua tree, tunneling long galleries down its contorted stubborn length, crumbling the fortress from within.

Now, though termites eat wood they cannot, all alone, digest it. A termite needs a friend, and even a termite has one. Within its alimentary canal dwell colonies of flagellate protozoans. These one-celled animals break down the cellulose of the Joshua tree, as the termite slowly devours it, into compounds available to the termite system. As each baby termite begins life seriously, it becomes infected with the flagellate protozoans, as it must or die. And flagellate protozoans must find some termite in which to live and prosper.

Thus is the web of life spun, on the desert as in cities.

Take another strand woven into the tough fibres of the Joshua tree. It leads you back a million years or more. I picked it up one day in the natural history museum of my little home city, when I stood beside a sober paleontologist gazing with reverence upon the exhibit in one of the specimen drawers he had carefully pulled forth for me. It consisted of dung. Dung taken out of a Nevada cave, million-year-old dung. Dung of the giant ground sloth, *Nothotherium*, a great hairy fellow who in his day could rear up and grasp with his forefeet the top branches of a Joshua tree, the better to eat them, my dear. Which is not conjecture, but the result of a meeting of great minds over this dung. My friend was a sloth man, one of the only three men qualified to speak on prehistoric sloths in our enlightened land. He pronounced the dung to be sloth dung. But it was a paleobotanist who, with micrometer and slide, had determined that what the sloth had for dinner that day a million years ago was a bite off a Joshua tree. This is science. Chastened about my own frivolous place in it, I went away from the hushed museum room housing the sloth dung, because I could not laugh there.

Now here is a land, a vast faunal province the size of two or three eastern states, distinguished from all the rest of the continent by its aridity, its thirsty wastes, its drying winds, its water-sucking heat. And it is an axiom in biology that where there is no water there is no life. The very word desert means that it is deserted by living things.

Yet the Mojave is populous with a life all its own. First to be noticed are the jackrabbits, mule ears pricked in perpetual apprehension; pack rats and wood rats are not hard to see. When the ground gives way beneath your foot, some little householder may find his roof caved in, a kangaroo rat, grasshopper mouse, pocket gopher or ground squirrel. This is the very kingdom of lizards; the crested lizard darts across the sand at a footfall and then turns, raising himself up like a small angry dragon to stare the intruder down; the hotter the day gets, the more the leopard lizard frisks; under the stones the gentle geckoes lie. At twilight the night lizard wriggles out from his Joshua tree, and over the cooling sands the snakes slip forth. The dusky sky is swept by little pipistrelles and chittering lump-nosed bats and, as the light goes, the long wings of Texas nighthawks shear the gloom, the white bar just visible on the underside of the murky plumage. In the enormous unbreathing calm of the darkening Mojave can be heard their faint purr, like an engine left running somewhere, and the mewing call by which they speak to one another. Far off rings the call of a burrowing owl, two notes that signal solitude.

Desert dawns are full of the chattering song of the bold cactus wrens, so out-size for their clan that they belie their wrenhood, of quarrelsome kingbirds and sweet-voiced Say phoebes. Industiously and secretively the horned larks forage in scattering little flocks among the scrub. There the roadrunner goes racing, a great raucous fugitive fowl who looks as if he had been in a cockfight and lost half his pride, and usually has the corner of a lizard hang-

ing from his mouth. And that mild-mannered plodder, the desert tortoise, pokes and scratches over his own business.

No water, no life; it is the law. When the West first was opened, the government sent out costly expeditions to chart the desert's waterholes. But for countless ages the animals have known them; the biggest, thirstiest creatures frequent them. Even geese and herons passing over the Mojave on migration know lonely oases; doves will fly fifty miles for a sip of water, since fifty miles is not an hour's journey to a dove. The small birds know spots where the few sips of water may be had which will suffice their tiny systems for the day. Even the dew film is important to a host of minute creatures. As for the tortoise, he provides for periods of drought by carrying about a pint of water with him in each of the two sacs under his shell.

The startling fact is that most desert animals go without drinking. Some of the small mammals probably have never had a drink from the day of weaning till their death. They derive their moisture from their food. The owls eat the pocket mice and find the water in the mice; the mice eat the plants and the plants, as usual, are the base of supply. It is enough, since the tiny desert beasts perspire little or not at all, and lose very little water from the kidneys.

But the water content of the seeds eaten by pocket mice, of the dry wood consumed by the powder-post beetles, is something so slight as to be imperceptible to human sense, almost inconceivable, indeed, to the imagination. Any animal that can keep alive on what we would call bone-dry food must have some trick of elaborating water within its own system. This is just what is done by countless species of desert creatures. Their water is called the water of metabolism.

It is one of the easily forgotten facts in the equation of combustion that an end product of fire is water. When you burn or oxidize organic product, the chemical sum of adding oxygen to the formula comes out as heat or energy, carbon dioxide, and water. Most of us animals, besides breathing out the carbon dioxide and using the energy to fight, think, work, or play, eliminate the water more or less polluted with poisons. Not so the economical desert dwellers. The tiny modicum of water produced by breathing-combustion is kept pure and circulated round and round inside the powder-post beetles as, with a faint sound like crackling flames, they reduce the desert shrubs to sawdust.

As the desert days open, blaze, and wither one after another, you become not so much inured to their elemental violence as overcome by it. Embattled by sun, wind, and drought, the desert, after all, is no more a place of utter peace than it is lifeless. These last snows on Old Baldy, and the hot breast of the Mojave sands, war perpetually to establish the temperature. The still, shimmering breath of the desert rises at morning to skies palely blue and pure. Its first long sighs lift the odor of sand verbena to the nostrils and carry bird song to the ears. That early breeze, sweet and cool, bestirs the heavy desert drowse like the trade wind in the tropics, that they call "the doctor." The

brightening glare seems easier to bear; under the tiled veranda of our 'dobe, I am at first refreshed, then cooled, finally chilly.

Noon brings the strong fresh forces of the snow-bred airs sweeping down upon the blazing dust. By one o'clock the wind is complete master of the desert. It is rising and falling in great puffs of strength, a stiff breeze even in the trough of its billows. Every door and window in the adobe is creaking and straining; the blows of the wind upon the roof set even those great red-wood beams to thrumming; the thrum is answered in the deep walls, and a subdued tremble goes through the floor. The angles, eaves, and slits all whistle and wail, a song that drops and soars. From within, I see the scrub outside fighting and bowing in the wind, and even the Joshua trees, though offering less resistant surface than any other trees I have ever seen, roll their upper torsos and bounce their blunt boughs up and down like elbows in a jig. So that, if the house is like a straining schooner, the desert is like a sea just beginning to whip up in response to the gale. Only the mountain ranges, like some far-off coast, remain unmoved.

Braving the blast of gusty heat, I roved the staring wastes to make acquaintance with what else was abroad. I heard the raven's hoarse syllable, uttered, it seems, with difficulty from an unused throat. It is laconic and sounds obsolete, something left over from speech learned long ago from the vanished Mojave Indians. I saw the raven shadows before I saw the birds, black and slow in the brilliant azure just above me.

There was another bird I followed through the chollas. In his long down-pitching swoop from one gaunt Joshua to the top of another in an upward flight like that of a trapeze artist who just doesn't miss his perch, I saw the white patches on his wings break out, plain as an unfurled pattern. But I did not know him till, turning his head in the strong light, he showed the mask of black velvet across his eyes, and the slender curve of his bill. The shrike is a bird with a bad name, the name of "butcher bird." Long before I ever saw one, I had been taught that, like the butcher who hangs a pig's carcass on a hook, the shrike impales its kill upon a thorn, but alive. This crucifixion singled him out, so my Fifth Reader said, as the one black-heart among the gentle tribe of small birds.

I have seen the dingy shards of grasshoppers dangling from hawthorn prongs, and known the insects did not dash themselves there by any accident. In winter I have seen field mice thus ganché upon the hooks, hardly at all decomposed because they were so hard-frozen. But, though in California you may notice a shrike on every section of telegraph wire, looking deceptively like a little mocking-bird, I never saw its tortured prey struggling alive upon the thorn. For the shrike generally eats his meal at once. If he is too full for that, he kills against a leaner day, like any provident soul, and hangs his food as the farmer hangs his flitches. He kills simply out of hunger, without hate, without sentiment of one sort or another. To be sentimental would, in Nature, be suicidal; if there is no compassion in it, neither is there any persecution. You cannot find in Nature anything evil, save as you misread it by human standards. Anger blazes in a fight between two bull moose; anger

then is a plain preservative measure, like fear which is the safeguard of all living. Together, these primary emotions bare the fang, they tense the muscles in the crouching haunch. You may call that hate, if you will, but it is brief and honest, not nursed in the dark like ours. In all of Nature, which fights for life because it loves life, there is nothing like human war.

We alone are responsible for the existence of cruelty, in the sense of maliciously inflicted pain. This is one of man's inventions—of which so many are already obsolete. Nature is too unimaginative to have thought it up, and too practical to waste time with it, since the pain of another creature is of no use or pleasure to any in the wild. In this present agony of mankind, men talk, shuddering, of "going back to the ways of the beasts." Let them consider the beasts' way, which is cleanly and reasonable, free of dogmas, creeds, political or religious intolerances. Let no one think he will find in Nature justification for human evil, or precedent for it. Or, even among our natural enemies, any but fair fighting.

After sunset on our last day at the ranch I walked out into the desert. Shadows gathering in the wide sandy miles below this yucca forest persuasively created the image of a sea. Light was thinning; the scrub's dry savory odors were sweet on the cooler air. In this, the first pleasant moment for a walk after long blazing hours, I thought I was the only thing abroad. Abruptly I stopped short.

The other lay rigid, as suddenly arrested, his body undulant; the head was not drawn back to strike, but was merely turned a little to watch what I would do. It was a rattlesnake—and knew it. I mean that where a six-foot blacksnake thick as my wrist, capable of long-range attack and armed with powerful fangs, will flee at sight of a man, the rattler felt no necessity of getting out of anybody's path. He held his ground in calm watchfulness; he was not even rattling yet, much less was he coiled; he was waiting for me to show my intentions.

My first instinct was to let him go his way and I would go mine, and with this he would have been well content. I have never killed an animal I was not obliged to kill; the sport in taking life is a satisfaction I can't feel. But I reflected that there were children, dogs, horses at the ranch, as well as men and women lightly shod; my duty, plainly, was to kill the snake. I went back to the ranch house, got a hoe, and returned.

The rattler had not moved; he lay there like a live wire. But he saw the hoe. Now indeed his tail twitched, the little tocsin sounded; he drew back his head and I raised my weapon. Quicker than I could strike he shot into a dense bush and set up his rattling. He shook and shook his fair but furious signal, quite sportingly warning me that I had made an unprovoked attack, attempted to take his life, and that if I persisted he would have no choice but to take mine if he could. I listened for a minute to this little song of death. It was not ugly, though it was ominous. It said that life was dear, and would be dearly sold. And I reached into the paper-bag bush with my hoe and, hacking about, soon dragged him out of it with his back broken.

He struck passionately once more at the hoe; but a moment later his neck

was broken, and he was soon dead. Technically, that is; he was still twitching, and when I picked him up by the tail, some consequent jar, some mechanical reflex made his jaws gape and snap once more—proving that a dead snake may still bite. There was blood in his mouth and poison dripping from his fangs; it was all a nasty sight, pitiful now that it was done.

I did not cut the rattles off for a trophy; I let him drop into the close green guardianship of the paper-bag bush. Then for a moment I could see him as I might have let him go, sinuous and self-respecting in departure over the twilit sands.

Out on the desert, nightfall puts an end which is merciful to the summer day. This last night was clear; a vast cool sense of space diminished earth to something nearer its relative proportion in the universe. For the stars were out, populating all heaven with their separate radiance.

Their shine tonight upon the upturned faces of my friends was gentle. But how, we wondered, can people dare seriously to believe in astrology? Have those so confident of Saturn's co-operation in their affairs ever really looked at Saturn? It's one thing to catch its twinkle with the naked eye, and another to peer into the astronomer's little mirror and see the ringed planet hung out there in all its giddy and enormous indifference.

There is a ten-inch telescope out here at the ranch, set up by the generous young editor of Victorville's weekly paper. My first look through it, one black January night when the desert sky was frosted over with drifts of stars, was distinctly more impressive and exciting to me than a peep through the sixty-inch on top of Mount Wilson. There you are one of a crowd, with somebody behind you coughing and nudging. And you are permitted to see just what they choose to show you—usually Saturn or Jupiter. You can't say, "Let's have a look at Sirius!" and have them swing the mirror around for you.

My friend beside me in the winter night allowed me to call the tune. I demanded to see Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars, and was promptly gratified. We just looked in the sky, located our star, and pulled the instrument into place, free hand, hunting with the lower power, as in a microscope, focusing into high. The Mount Wilson instrument is clocked to swing against the rotation of the earth, keeping the object in view. A great convenience, but not comparable in excitement with this amateur instrument in which one searched for Saturn and found it, rings a-tilt, tearing out of the field of vision. You had to chase it, like a hound of heaven after a celestial jackrabbit. Nothing so gives you the consciousness of astronomical speed and momentum as this simple phenomenon of earthly rotation.

I cried then not for the moon but for Canopus, the second most gorgeous luminary in all the visible universe, queen star of the southern hemisphere, to be seen in America only in the south, and in the winter months, when it just rises, skims low in a brief arc and early sets. Though Sirius is apparently brighter, that is due to its nearness, eight and six-tenths light years away. Canopus is so far away that the distance is immeasurable; it is so brilliant that its candle power has never been ascertained. In the telescopic mirror I

beheld it as an object from which great tongues of curling, leaping flame flashed indecipherable signals of blue, red, purple, yellow, and white.

In actuality, of course, this too is a purely terrestrial and optical illusion. The beauty of Canopus was all due to the earth's envelope of atmosphere. Outside our mortal dusty sphere, Canopus must be a horrible, blinding search-light stabbing through a black and icy void. Realistic astronomy is the most terrifying of all sciences. Philosophically, esthetically, it is only endurable for me in a ten-inch reflector.

That night, as I peered and asked questions and chattered my teeth in the bitter desert wind, all the time I could hear the howling of the coyotes. It is a sound that begins with a few sharp barks, rather like the whining splash of a horsewhip in the air, and is followed by a long, tremulous, singing quaver. By repute this is the loneliest of all earthly sounds. But not after you have been looking at the cold, relentless, lifeless fact of Saturn, or the threat of the "horse's head" in Orion. A coyote sounds then like a brother; he is living; after his fashion he is talking, communicating, even singing. It was good to know that wolves were close at hand, hot of breath, with beating hearts, and mortal hungers like our own.

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THE LINGERING DRYAD

THERE is an everyday test which is instinctively applied when we are in doubt as to whether a certain thing is alive. We watch for it to move. This test is as old as humanity, though as now applied we introduce a logical refinement which was lacking in other days. Absence of motion, now as then, indicates absence of life, but the mere observation of motion does not always suggest to modern thought the presence of life. A sheet of paper may be rustled by an invisible breeze; stormy waves may arise in the ocean; the ground beneath our feet may tremble and split open; yet we of today see in such phenomena no reason for assuming life as a cause.

Not so with the ancients. To them motion invariably suggested life, directly

"The Linging Dryad," from the *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

or indirectly involved. The sheet of paper, of course, was not alive, but the wind was the breath of Aeolus. The stormy sea was the direct physical result of the wrathful strokes of Neptune's trident, and the heaving earth, by the same token, gave evidence of the displeasure of Poseidon, the earth-shaker.

Though the mythology of the ancients contained much that is now regarded as childish and ridiculous, there is also to be found in it that which we must still recognize as beautiful, such as the myth of the dryad.

The dryad was a tree nymph. Every tree had its protecting spirit who was born with the tree, living in or near it in intimate association, watching over its growth and dying when the tree fell. The dryad was thus a personification of the life of the tree, and the connection between nymph and tree was far more intimate than was the case with the deities dominating sea or wind. Because of this peculiarly intimate relation the tree possessed life which the sea did not, though Neptune inhabited its depths, and which the wind did not, though set in motion by Aeolus.

The men of old, it seems, drew very much the same distinction that we do when we speak of living and nonliving substances. Water, they observed, never grew old or died, but a tree was obviously a living thing: almost one of us, growing, reproducing its kind, and eventually dying. And as the ancients had difficulty in forming an idea of life without an animating personality there arose naturally the concept of the inseparable tree nymph.

Human thinking from the first has been frankly anthropomorphic. Only in modern times has there been any notable effort to cast out anthropomorphism from our philosophy, and this struggle has not yet resulted in victory. Even today, with hereditary habits of thought heavy upon us, the concept of impersonal, physical causes is drab and unsatisfying, and we spell Nature with a capital N; the dryad lingers.

In the chemistry of other days an interesting case is found of the persistence of this mode of thought. The old alchemists knew that wine by boiling lost its intoxicating power. Because they could see nothing escaping they said that the "spirit of wine" had found its abode too hot for it, and had taken its departure. Cassio used no figure of speech when he apostrophized the "invisible spirit of wine" by which he had been so disastrously possessed of the devil, and the name "spirit" as applied to alcohol is still in common use.

With the advance of knowledge it was found that many other phenomena besides intoxication owed their causes to inanimate, prosaic chemical compounds rather than to spirits or devils. So strong, however, is heredity that the dryad, instead of disappearing from human thinking, merely changed her form and retreated under fire to a position of advantage across a natural barrier, where she long remained in safety.

It was many years before this barrier was crossed. The dividing line between organic and inorganic substances was a sharp one in the eighteenth century, and from her safe refuge in the domain of organic chemistry the dryad long watched her baffled foes. The older chemists divided the province of their science in two by a water-tight partition. All compounds with which they were acquainted could be analyzed or broken down into their elements, but not

all of them could be built up again by human skill. Water might be formed from its constituents, but not sugar or starch; yet these latter substances were daily synthesized in the laboratory of Nature, in the tissues of animal or vegetable matter; and because they were never known to occur in mineral or inorganic matter, substances of this type were called, from their origin, organic compounds.

Years of experience had given rise to the belief that there existed between these two classes of substances a difference in kind rather than in degree, and that there was some reason not understood why organic compounds could not be synthesized artificially. This unknown reason was given a name; it was called the "vital force."

It often happens that when the unknown is named it appears as if it were more than half explained. The vital force once named soon came to be a familiar concept. It was held to be resident in living matter, whether animal or vegetable, much like the dryad in the tree. It was believed to differ in kind from the chemical and physical forces that governed the formation of inorganic compounds. Under the influence of this vital force it was believed that all the chemical reactions of living matter took place, and it was even supposed to govern the decompositions that occurred after death.

The belief in a vital force of this nature was universal among eighteenth century chemists, even Berzelius being found among its adherents. The vital force seems to have been regarded with something like the awe inspired by the supernatural, and it was well into the nineteenth century before its hold on men's minds began to relax.

The year 1928 marked the century of an epoch in human thought, for it was just 100 years since the doctrine of a vital force received its logical death blow. In 1828 Wöhler succeeded in producing by laboratory methods the first organic compound. This was urea, which he prepared by simply heating an inorganic compound, ammonium cyanate, containing the same elements as urea, namely carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, and in the same proportions.

This was a body blow at the dryad, but she died hard. Her devoted adherents rallied to her support and explained away Wöhler's result in various fashions. In this they were aided by the fact that for years this synthesis stood alone, suggesting that there was something exceptional about it. Some said that this proved merely that a mistake had been made; that urea was not really an organic substance, but occupied a place halfway between the organic and inorganic kingdoms. Others argued curiously that the carbon of the cyanate retained some trace or memory of the vital force which had ruled it when it had previously been a part of some organic compound. But in time other syntheses were achieved in such numbers that the accumulated evidence became overwhelming, and it was finally recognized that organic chemistry was only complicated inorganic chemistry, and that the difference between the two was not one of kind, but of degree of complexity.

We have said that the dryad died hard. As a matter of fact she did not die at all; she emigrated. Dispossessed by the advancing frontier of knowledge

from the domain of organic chemistry which had so long afforded her a refuge, she retreated under fire into a less understood region beyond—into the biological sciences. Here the complexity of phenomena was, and still is, so great that among the shadows the dryad still finds a retreat.

Biologists are divided into two camps: vitalists and mechanists. Between them a conflict rages, and the fate of the dryad still hangs in the balance. The vitalists argue that whatever may have been the case in the past we have now, by the progress of our knowledge, reached a dividing line which really marks a difference in kind; that there have been brought to light in the realm of biology phenomena of such a nature that they are not explainable by ordinary chemical or physical principles; that it is necessary to assume a principle peculiar to living matter (in other words, a "vital force") to explain them. The mechanist, on the other hand, says that exactly the same arguments have been advanced in the past in connection with problems that seemed just as insoluble, and that these arguments have finally been disposed of by the progress of our knowledge. Differences in kind, once regarded as numerous in Nature, have slowly and steadily been resolved into differences in degree. Sharp lines of demarcation have been wiped out until the line between the living and the nonliving is perhaps the only one left. Such diverse phenomena as those of electricity and light have been found to be closely akin; man himself has been shown to be one with the rest of animated Nature; and if the past is any guide to the future, it seems that even this last sharp line will some day disappear also.

Perhaps the vitalist himself may not realize it, but to the student of the philosophy of history this vague "difference in kind" suggests the last lingering trace of what was once a dryad. As a cloudlet dwindles and disappears in the beams of the sun so the dryad has shrunk to a mere wisp of vapor, which with a little more light seems destined to disappear forever.

But now that we have finished pointing out the mote that is in the biologist's eye, let us examine our own clarity of vision. Are we physical scientists in any measure responsible for the lingering of the dryad?

By the latter half of the nineteenth century physical theory had become a well-knit, sharply crystallized, and self-sufficient body of doctrine. While it was recognized fully and generally that much was as yet unknown, it was felt quite as generally that what had been established would, with perhaps a little amendment and modification, stand forever. The physical theory of the last century was much admired by its devotees, upon whom it reacted in turn to the extent of making them at times a bit dogmatic. If there was a conflict between physics and a sister science, physics must be right.

The classical instance of this attitude is the famous controversy over the age of the earth, between the physicists on the one hand and the geologists and biologists on the other. Perhaps nothing in the annals of nineteenth century physics made such an impression upon the sister sciences. This controversy lasted for 33 years with unabated vigor, and was not finally settled until the discovery of radioactive substances.

In 1862, upon the basis of the laws of the conduction of heat as laid down by Fourier, Kelvin calculated that the time that had elapsed since the earth had solidified from a molten state could not be less than 20,000,000 or more than 400,000,000 years. He admitted that rather wide limits were necessary, but was inclined to attach more weight to the lower figure than to the higher. In this he was confirmed by a similar calculation made by Helmholtz of the age of the sun.

At this estimate biologists and geologists stood aghast. The prospect of having to pack into a paltry 400,000,000 years the whole progress of organic evolution from amoeba to man seemed to biologists unreasonable. And with the geologists the situation was still worse. It was generally recognized that a very long period of time must have elapsed after solidification before life of the most primitive form made its appearance, and this period, in addition to that required by evolution, must be made to fit Kelvin's Procrustean bed. Moreover, it was felt by geologists that such a view involved a return to eighteenth century ideas, from which geology was just beginning to emerge.

Prior to the nineteenth century geological thought was of the catastrophic school. It was held that natural forces were more active and powerful in past geological ages than they now are; that great convulsions of Nature had riven the crust asunder into valleys and elevated other portions into mountains. By the middle of the nineteenth century the opposite, or uniformitarian, school of thought had achieved the ascendancy, largely through the influence of the geologist Lyell. On this view it was held that geological processes had never differed seriously from those of the present day. As a consequence of this doctrine an immense antiquity was required for the earliest geological strata, and with this almost unlimited time at their disposal biologists felt unhampered.

Then came Kelvin's bombshell. Protest and appeal were not lacking, but Kelvin was inexorable. Physics, he said, could grant no more, and physics held the power of the purse of time.

The widespread and long-continued interest in this controversy is evidenced by the many letters published on the subject in *Nature* from January to April, 1895. As proof of the fact that Kelvin did not stand alone in this matter it is of interest to note that not a single physicist failed to support him in theory, though there was a general feeling that perhaps his limits might be widened somewhat. The discussion was finally summed up by its initiator, Professor John Perry, who expressed the opinion that the upper limit assigned by Kelvin might perhaps be multiplied by four. But this concession brought about no rapprochement. The two sides were not near enough to dicker.

A few years later the deadlock was finally resolved by the discovery of radioactivity. This new and totally unexpected source of terrestrial heat nullified Kelvin's fundamental postulate, and allowed as much time as the most extreme views could require.

Rightly or wrongly, this celebrated case had an unfortunate effect upon interscientific relations. The biologists, in particular, felt that the character of their problems and the evidence for their conclusions were not appreciated by

the physicist. The impression was gained that physics was for some reason incompetent to treat of biological questions, and that the life sciences required for their complete discussion and development something that was not and could not be found in physical theory. It may scarcely be doubted, I think, that this impression of the inadequacy of physics went far toward strengthening and prolonging the life of the vitalistic hypothesis.

But, to be fair, we must recognize that the vitalism of today is not that of a century ago. To use a term borrowed from mineralogy, it is but a pseudomorph of its predecessor, cast in the mold of the older form and simulating its outward shape, but inwardly of a different composition. The neovitalist of today disclaims utterly anything savoring of the occult or the supernatural; short of this, he is ready to accept any adequate explanation of life. He maintains, however, with equal firmness that even modern physical theory lacks something necessary to explain vital phenomena, that no interplay of atoms, however complicated, can account for the simplest manifestation of life. In brief, the vitalist looks outward for the explanation of life; the mechanist looks inward.

The attitude of the mechanist is, for the present, largely one of faith and hope rather than sight. He admits that modern physical theory affords no explanation of life, and that there is no reason to believe we are any nearer a solution now than we were a century ago. But, encouraged by precedent, he holds steadily his faith that some new and unexpected discovery may at any time clear our vision as radioactivity clarified that of our predecessors. And he is confident that when the solution of this mystery is reached it will be found to be internal rather than external.

But while we are waiting for something of this kind to happen, may we by any chance find some foreshadowing of a possible common ground in existing physical theory?

Let us imagine, if we can, someone whose physical experience has been limited to solids and who is ignorant of molecules and atoms. The latter will not be so difficult when it is remembered that it has not been so very long ago that we were all ignorant of any subatomic structure. Matter, to our supposed observer, is continuous and infinitely divisible without alteration in its properties; its structure is perfectly uniform to the last conceivable degree. Suppose further that he observes for the first time the melting of a solid. In this process the thing which would probably impress him most would be its abruptness, its sharp initiation. By continual influx of heat the solid suffers a steady rise of temperature, which seems as though it might continue indefinitely so long as heat is supplied. But suddenly, without warning or apparent cause, a critical point is reached. Though the influx of heat is not halted the temperature stops rising. A new effect is seen, different in kind from any phenomenon known in solids. We say that the body is undergoing a change of state and is becoming a liquid. In this new state new laws govern its behavior; new properties are evident, differing in kind, not in degree, from those of solids.

Our unsophisticated observer might well wonder at this curious behavior; but should we, from our superior knowledge, attempt to tell him that this difference in appearance and behavior is not a matter of composition or outside forces, but of internal structure, we might find him rather incredulous.

"No," he might say. "Something has happened to stop the rise of temperature. There has been an introduction of a new factor into the situation. You speak of structural difference. I do not understand you. The structure of a solid, as I am familiar with it, could not be more simple than it is—continuous, infinitely divisible, uniform throughout, with no shade of difference anywhere upon which to build up an explanation. No, we must look outside for the cause of this change. Liquid phenomena are not expressible in terms of the properties of solids. He who maintains that they are is a mechanist."

This belief might be confirmed if he pushed the heating of the liquid far enough. At a second critical point, again unheralded and without apparent reason, the liquid begins to boil, and the resulting gas exhibits a new set of phenomena, differing in kind from anything to be found in either solids or liquids. The new phenomena in this case depart even more widely from those of the other states than was the case at the first critical point.

To us, with our knowledge of molecules, the explanation of these critical points and different states is comparatively simple and internal. It is true that the phenomena of one state are not to be expressed in terms of the properties of another; the behavior of gases cannot be deduced from the laws of elastic solids or of incompressible liquids. The solution does not lie in a line joining one state to another, but goes back from each state to the common basis of molecular structure underlying all states, something of which our observer is yet to become aware. And until a similar common ground for the phenomena of living and nonliving matter is recognized there must be a difference of opinion between the vitalist and the mechanist.

What this common basis may be we cannot as yet surmise. It remains for some new discovery to open our eyes. It must be something deeper and more fundamental than molecules or atoms. In so far the vitalist is right; and in so far as he maintains that the mere interplay of atoms contains the key to the mystery, the mechanist is wrong. But such a common basis, underlying and forming part of nonliving as well as living matter, would be an internal factor, and it is for such a factor that the mechanist is looking.

The parallel here suggested is worth pushing farther. The past history of Nature has been one of change, of growth, of that development which we call evolution. Her future, if hindsight is to be trusted, will carry this evolution onward to a consummation of which we can form no conception as yet. Nature, we may say, has been steadily warming up to her work since the beginning of things. And in this warming-up process several critical stages may be distinguished, strangely suggestive of the different states of matter.

The first of these critical points was reached millions of years ago, when life first made its appearance: a totally new phenomenon superimposed upon inanimate Nature. For untold ages life was impossible on the earth, but even-

tually, when conditions allowed, life appeared, no one knows how. With this appearance new phenomena not to be found in inorganic Nature began to show themselves. With the advent of the organic, new motives of action are recognizable, and new combinations are possible. The vitalist explains this by bringing in a mysterious something from the outside; the mechanist is persuaded that matter in acquiring life has not ceased to be a conservative system; only in its behavior is it transformed.

Moreover, this transformation has not been complete. Living and nonliving matter exist side by side and will probably continue to do so. The physicist would call this the coexistence of two phases at one temperature, like a mixture of ice and water at the freezing point, each following its own laws and exhibiting its own characteristic properties under the same environment.

We may, perhaps, by poetic license think of the first beginnings of life as feeling strange and lonely in the midst of the nonliving matter surrounding them, so different in properties, in behavior. And perhaps we may imagine that the works and ways of nonliving matter occasionally grated on the sensibilities of the living, and called forth the protest: "Why are you so mechanical? Why not show a little flexibility occasionally?" But this protest, we may imagine, was wasted. "It is my ancient way," replied nonliving Nature. "The way I did for millions of years before you newcomers appeared upon the scene. I cannot mend my case. Why not do as I do and be sociable?" But this is just what living matter will not do. Like white men in the Tropics, it maintains its standard of living among an overwhelming majority of an inferior grade of civilization.

Many years have passed. Life is no longer a newcomer, a feeble colony, but has waxed mighty, and has become the outstanding feature of the earth's surface. And now a second critical point is reached. Life has attained such a degree of complexity that a new set of phenomena is beginning to make its appearance, something different in kind from anything that has been before; as different in its turn as was life itself compared to inanimate matter; something superimposed upon life as life of old was superimposed upon the nonliving. And it is, appropriately enough, in man, the highest type of life, the flower of creation, the peak of evolution, "the heir of all the ages in the foremost rank of time," that this new thing first makes itself manifest—a moral sense, an ethical feeling, which often finds itself as much a stranger in its environment as life must have felt among the crystals and colloids among which it began its existence. If we must find a single word to express this new quality let us call it "Soul."

Within us is developing a new thing, as wonderful as life itself and no less rich in possibilities. Life in its turn has brought forth something of a higher order, transcending itself, as it once transcended nonliving matter. And that this new thing has elected to make its appearance in and through us, the highest of Nature's children, what is more reasonable? Do men gather figs of thistles?

But here the vitalist takes his last stand. "I know," says he, "that past history points your way; that, one step after another, I have been forced to give ground. I, who once held that no one but God could make an organic compound, have lived to see it done by high-school students. You mechanists, on the other hand, have pressed steadily forward. But beware lest, flushed with success and intoxicated with power, you attempt too much and achieve your own downfall. What you tell me now goes beyond all bounds of credence. Am I to understand that all that makes a man, his ethics, his poetry, his music, his aspirations, his ideals, are from within? Are these, too, of the earth, earthy? Never! These, at last, must come from without. Can ideals rise higher than their source?"

Of the earth, earthy! But why should there be anything mean or unworthy about that which comes from within rather than from without? Is the macrocosm essentially nobler than the microcosm?

True, tradition runs that way. Man at different times has set his gods in the most inaccessible places, on the summit of Mount Olympus, or across the rainbow bridge in Asgard; but the greatest idealist that our race has produced broke with this tradition when he said: "The kingdom of God is within you."

And perhaps it may be true that ideals can rise higher than their apparent source. Just as every great genius had parents of less than his own ability, who yet in some mysterious way endowed him with more than they themselves possessed, so Nature has produced within us something without precedent in the life history of the earth. And as a parent watches with pride a child who gives early promise of outdistancing his elders, so Mother Nature may be watching us.

What is this new thing which Nature has brought forth, and with the development of which we have been intrusted? No man can say, but it is a fair inference that it will go far. Life has gone far from a tiny speck of protoplasm; who knows to what lengths this new thing, this mind, this soul, if you will, may carry us? For it doth not yet appear what we shall be.

SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS *Not many authors have the versatility, prolificness, and knack of selling well which belong to Samuel Hopkins Adams. Born and educated in New York State, he has a rich background of experience on the staff of the old Sun and McClure's; in addition, he capitalized on early study in the field of medicine by writing magazine articles on public health, including one for Collier's which exposed the quackery of the modern patent medicine racket. Logically, then, but remarkably, Adams is a lay associate member of the American Medical Association in addition to being an author of a long list of novels (largely dealing with history or civic reform), biographies, serials, short stories, and feature articles. Notable among these are the novel Revelry (about the Harding administration) and the story "It*

Happened One Night," outstanding among the many tales by Adams which have reached the screen.

NOTES ON AN UNPLEASANT FEMALE

A PLUMP, long-legged spider emerged from the rotten log that I was carrying to the fireplace and fell to the floor, where it lay on its back for a moment before turning clumsily over and making for refuge. Its belly displayed a design in red, roughly resembling an hourglass. Recognizing by this danger signal that I was in the presence of a black-widow spider, I stepped on the creature. That was thirty years ago.

Ever since then, curious to know what I had escaped, I have intermittently been on the lookout for someone who had been bitten by a black widow. In upstate New York, where I live, the species is rare. Stories of its malignant temperament and capacities, however, are not. Through the years, in the course of my random investigation of the subject, I have picked up and tracked down several reports of supposedly authentic instances of its bite. One case proved to be merely a badly infected hornet sting. Another was caused by a pimple which developed into erysipelas, the spider under suspicion turning out to be quite harmless. A third reputed victim had sat down on a rusty nail and developed tetanus. Other cases either were of origins too dubious to determine or, more often, outright newspaper fakes.

Meantime, although verifiable instances of bites did not come my way, data on the spider did. *Latrodectus mactans*, as the North American black widow is known to arachnologists, enjoys pretty much the run of this continent, and it has equally poisonous cousins of the genus *Latrodectus* in nearly every other part of the world. Encounters with black widows have been reported in Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Madagascar. In this hemisphere the spider is known all the way from Canada to Tierra del Fuego, and in this country its presence has been recorded in every state except four Midwestern ones and Vermont. In the Deep South, where black widows are especially common, soldiers in training camps have found them a persistent hazard of maneuvers, and I have it on the word of several young men who have been stationed down there that the bite of this pest can put a husky warrior to bed in agony for three or four days. Because of the spider's unobtrusive habits and its preference for dim and remote haunts, it escapes much public notice. Most people have never seen a black widow and wouldn't know one if they came across it. The newspapers occasionally become excited about "epidemics" of black widows, as they did in 1934 and again a couple of years ago, whereupon scores of bites, mostly imaginary or flatly fictional, are reported, fortified by horrific representations of the creature's deadliness.

"Notes on an Unpleasant Female," from *The New Yorker*, September 12, 1942. Permission of *The New Yorker*. Copyright 1942, The F-R. Publishing Corporation.

The full-grown female black widow has a rather obese body about half an inch long and eight one-inch, sprangling legs. Naturally, she has a consort, but he is hardly one-fourth her size, bites only rarely and then with almost no effect, and seldom has the luck to become a black widower, owing to the female's shrewish habit of eating him shortly after mating. Having thus put him to the double purpose of bed and board, the widow withdraws to her web and lays her eggs.

The widow is inclined to be torpid in movement and slow to wrath, biting, except for natural predatory purposes, only when cornered or rudely annoyed. Within reasonable size limits, she will eat anything that she can kill, cockroaches, water bugs, and flies being her preferred items of diet. Drafty, old-fashioned outhouses are among her most favored hunting grounds; in them she weaves her coarse and somewhat unworkmanlike web where it will most likely intercept the flights of winged insects as they come and go. That is why a large proportion of her human victims are bitten in strictly personal localities.

The red (sometimes orange) hourglass mark on the belly of the black widow is peculiar to the species, which is officially credited by the United States Bureau of Entomology with being the only spider "considered as definitely venomous" to be found in the United States. Champions of the lethal capacities of the tarantula will probably rise to amend. They are preredferred to a leading authority in this field, Dr. W. J. Baerg, Professor of Entomology at the University of Arkansas, who has concluded from experiments with fourteen species of tarantula that the poison is not dangerous to man and produces only local symptoms. Dread of the tarantula, it would appear, may be assumed to be the result of hysteria, inspired by the horrendous appearance of the monster.

How "deadly" is the black widow? On the basis of not wholly conclusive testimony, it would seem that her bite is no joke, but neither is it in a class with cobra bite or Asiatic cholera. Medical writers cite death rates ranging from one to ten per cent among persons bitten by the spider. Whence the ten-per-centers derive their data is not clear, unless on a quasi-syllogistic basis, thus: spider bites man, man dies; *ergo*, spider is guilty of man's death. Many recorded cases are as dubious as this.

For example, two deaths are on record in a clinic at Woodland, California. One of the victims was seventy-eight years old, syphilitic, and had heart disease. If a bird had pecked him on the nose, he might well have died of it. Autopsy on the other case showed a "ballooned" intestine, resulting in digestive paralysis, with all of which the accused spider probably had about as much connection as if the deceased had died of prolapsus uteri. The California State Board of Health lists thirteen deaths in fourteen years from "spider bite," "poison-bug bite," and "insect bite" (spiders, by the way, are not insects). More than half the entries mention contributory causes, ranging from urethral abscess to cirrhosis of the liver. The report seems to me to put the hearse before the horse; it is the spider who should be listed, if at all, as the contributory cause. Many cases came under the observation of Dr. R. H. Evans, an Arkan-

sas physician, while he was practicing there in the town of McCrory. One of these resulted in death. A Negro woman, far advanced in pregnancy, was bitten. She recovered; the child died. In the absence of other apparent cause, the physician was inclined to attribute the death to the poison. One may doubt whether a jury would convict on the evidence.

More conservative than the medical fraternity, arachnologists tend to play down the black-widow peril. Professor J. H. Comstock, in "The Spider Book," states with scientific conservatism that "the percentage [of deaths] is certainly very small." And Dr. Baerg, who has himself been bitten, writes me:

In my opinion fatal termination of black-widow bite cases is extremely rare. . . . When questioned, I have commonly stated that if an infant were bitten in the neck, I would predict that it would either die or have an awful time pulling through.

Furthermore, the pharmaceutical firm of Sharp & Dohme in Philadelphia, which has had considerable experience in making antivenin for black-widow bite, deprecates crediting the spider with an overly lethal record in its contacts with man. I have received a communication from a representative of this company, which certainly should not be expected to minimize the threat of the black widow. He writes, in part, as follows:

We are inclined to disapprove the publication of such figures as were quoted by the *Medical World* in October, 1939 (57:669). The statement is made that "Many spider bites are reported every year in the United States. Of 600 cases reported, 40 were fatal." Such statistics cannot give a true picture of the actual situation. . . . While the statistics published by the *Medical World* apparently show that the mortality rate is about $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of those bitten, there is every reason to believe that the actual rate is considerably lower.

My correspondent observes that fatal cases are much more likely to be reported to the authorities than non-fatal ones and that in many non-fatal cases the victim doesn't even suspect that he has been bitten by a black widow.

This much may be said for the lady *Latrodectus*, however: Her venom, drop for drop, is probably the most virulent poison secreted by any living organism. It is fifteen times stronger than the venom of a prairie rattlesnake, and the only reason the black widow has not correspondingly more victims to her credit is that she has at her disposal only $1/200$ th of the amount of poison her rival carries. A rattler endowed with a charge of equal potency could kill an elephant in jigtime. Also, if the ardent testimony of victims is to be trusted, the black widow's poison produces an all-time high in pain.

My first encounter with a person who knew the effects of black-widow bite from direct experience was brought about by a medical friend in Jacksonville, Florida, whom I visited recently in the hope of tracking down just such a case. Florida has been particularly spider-conscious since one day in 1939 when a coastwise vessel docked at Miami and its captain made frantic representations to the quarantine authorities that his hold was overrun with black widows, which had even emerged on deck and taken up residence in the life-

boats, scaring his crew to the verge of mutiny. The invaders had come aboard, presumably, at Gulf ports at which the ship had called, having been attracted to her by the cockroaches with which she was amply supplied. The ship was de-spidered at Miami and several hundred dead black widows were removed, but many live ones evidently got ashore. My Jacksonville friend had gathered data on several local black-widow victims, one of whom was ready to be interviewed. "Not the most recent but the best," he said to me as we set out to meet this individual. He meant the best medically.

The victim was Mr. H. J. Rogero (pronounced "Ro-her'-o"), whose experience, it turned out, predated the Miami incursion. My friend and I found him at the seed-and-flower store he runs in Jacksonville. Though Mr. Rogero's misfortune is several years old, his memory of it is explicit, and he still speaks of it with emotion. He recalled that on the day he was bitten he was at work in a small pond on his country place at Mandarin, Florida, on the St. Johns River, and had put on, over his bare feet, a pair of loose, knee-high laced boots, which had been lying in a dark corner of the back porch. While in the water he felt a sharp jab on his left foot.

"Not like a sting," Mr. Rogero told us. "More like being stabbed with a needle."

It was painful enough, he said, to decide him to remove the boot. While unlacing it, he was bitten twice more. When he got the boot off, he shook it and a spider fell out, looking like just another spider to him except that its under side was brilliantly marked.

"Pretty little fella," said Mr. Rogero reminiscently, if unscientifically, in view of the undoubted sex of his attacker. "I almost hated to kill him."

Presently, he went on, three small, red spots appeared on the upper side of his foot, between the little toe and its neighbor. Ignoring an unpleasant burning sensation, somewhat allayed when he stepped back into the cool water, he continued his work. At five o'clock, four hours after the bite, he went into the house and undressed, preparatory to taking a bath.

"It hit me like a hammer," said Mr. Rogero. "I fell back on the bed and everything got black. As soon as I could stand, I called my wife, got into my car, and we hit the road to my doctor's."

The physician had had no experience with black-widow bite; all he knew on the subject was that the Seminole Indians of the interior had told him about a small black-and-red spider whose bite they considered worse than a rattler's. He hopefully gave his patient a sedative and advised Mrs. Rogero to apply hot compresses.

Mr. Rogero drove home, suffering severely. It seemed to him that a mist kept sweeping up across his eyes. "I thought it was bad," he said to us. "It was only a starter." At ten o'clock that night, the first convulsion set in.

"It wasn't exactly pain," Mr. Rogero continued. "It was something different. It went up my back like hell-fire, up to my neck, and across my shoulders. If it reached my head, I knew I was gone. It didn't; it went down way to the toes of both legs, and up and down in waves. My muscles all knotted tight. I couldn't do a thing to help myself."

When a second or third spasm hit him, Mrs. Rogero summoned the doctor, and her husband began to tear up his bed clothing. He ripped the heavy sheets into strips, like tissue paper. "If you think that's easy to do," Mr. Rogero suggested, "try it."

All that night there was no letup. Sometimes there would be two attacks in an hour. The physician was in and out, attempting to control the onsets with drugs. He was more alarmed than the patient. "I wouldn't let myself believe that a *spider* could kill me," Mr. Rogero told us. "But if I'd known as much as I do now, I guess I might have died. It got so I'd say to myself, 'This is the last, Rogero. It's got to be the last. You can't stand any more of this, Rogero.' Then I'd pop my teeth till I wonder they didn't break."

Not until the third day did the doctor consider the patient out of danger. For a month Mr. Rogero was fearfully sore all through his back and legs. Pus sacs formed around the bites. To this day he feels pain there when the weather changes.

Several months after his recovery, Mr. Rogero was interested to find two black widows in a cleared space in his back yard. They appeared to be comatose, and while he was looking at them, a third, similarly inert, was dropped not far off by one of the large blue wasps locally known as mud-daubers. Consulting a scientific friend, Mr. Rogero learned that these insects paralyze the spiders with a carefully placed sting and use them as food for their larvae. Since then he has cherished mud-daubers. "I'll fight any man I catch harming a dauber," he told us earnestly, as my friend and I took our leave.

In one respect, the Rogero case was exceptional. Almost invariably the pains and spasms are in the abdominal muscles, whereas his were in the legs, back, and shoulders. A recognized symptom is a boardlike rigidity of the stomach, which is so similar to the signs of an advanced stage of perforated ulcer of the intestine that surgeons have sometimes been misled into operating. Medical reports on black-widow bite frequently and darkly refer to instances of such erroneous diagnosis and operation, though, for obvious reasons having to do with professional discretion, names and details are suppressed. In these reports surgeons are earnestly adjured to pause, where other evidence of intestinal involvement is lacking, and explore for marks of spider bite before reaching for the scalpel.

Through my medical friend in Jacksonville, I subsequently made the acquaintance of another gentleman who knows what it is to be bitten by a black widow—Mr. Johnny Bradberry, assistant sports editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*. Symptomatically considered, Mr. Bradberry's case runs truer to type than Mr. Rogero's. Mr. Bradberry had his set-to with a black widow five or six years ago, when he was a husky, twenty-year-old student at the University of Georgia, which is in his home town, Athens, but he too has no trouble recalling it. He told me that, turning over in bed at home one morning, half awake, he felt a sharp prick in the small of his back. Sleepily he groped for what he supposed was a pin but found nothing and stretched out for a final snooze.

"Just then she let me have it again," Mr. Bradberry said. "That waked me up all right."

Satisfied that he was dealing with no casual pin, he hopped out of bed, threw back the covers, and saw the spider. Having recently attended a motion picture in which the villain murdered his victim through the agency of a black widow, the young man recognized his assailant and, after dressing and telling his family what had befallen him, lost no time in getting to the local hospital. The Bradberry family physician arrived with Johnny's two brothers, about half an hour after the bite. Meanwhile the poison had worked swiftly.

"Just about the time they got there I started to hurt," Mr. Bradberry told me. "And I mean *hurt*. Pains shot all over me. It was in the stomach that they hurt most. I couldn't get my breath. I couldn't talk. And I couldn't relax. Try clenching both your fists and drawing up your stomach as tight as possible. Hold every other muscle as tight as you can and then try to talk without breathing. That's how I felt."

He said he retained his sense of what was going on about him sufficiently to overhear the doctor say to one of the brothers, "Frankly, Lee, I don't know what to do for him. The serum that we once used for such cases has been taken off the market. I don't think there is danger of death, but you can't tell. I guess it depends on how much poison the spider was carrying at the time of the bite."

"As my spider had had two good shots at me," Mr. Bradberry observed to me with some feeling, "this didn't help much. Besides, I kept thinking of that damn movie."

For two days the victim had a bad time of it.

"I couldn't relax or lie still except under the influence of drugs," Mr. Bradberry recalled. "On the third day I felt better—that is, until they poured three doses of Epsom salts down me within an hour."

The patient went home the next day, where he was kept in bed for forty-eight hours. The poison was not yet through with him, however.

"For a month or more, without warning," he said, "a muscle would tighten up and quiver like a bowl of jelly, and that would keep on for two or three minutes. Nothing I could do would stop it."

Since describing his own experience to me, Mr. Bradberry has had occasion to study the effects of black-widow bite on a neighbor and has been good enough to pass along the details. The neighbor is Mrs. H. L. Duncan, who not long ago moved into a new house in a section of Atlanta which until recently had been woodland. While cleaning up the front yard one day, Mrs. Duncan gathered some brush into her arms and was carrying it to a dump when a spider ran across her chest and onto her shoulder. Feeling no bite, she casually brushed it off, stepped on it, and went on with her work. In a few minutes a spot on one of her arms, up near the shoulder, began to sting—"as if a hornet had sat down on me," she said to Mr. Bradberry—and a red circle the size of a half-dollar, with a white spot in the centre, developed at the place of pain.

Becoming alarmed, Mrs. Duncan drove to the hospital, prudently taking the

dead spider along with her. By the time she got there the stinging sensation had spread through her back, arms, and chest. It felt, she told Mr. Bradberry, as if a million needles were being jabbed into her, "all the way into my muscles." Hospital authorities identified the spider as a black widow and, being supplied with the proper antivenin, which had become available since the time of Mr. Bradberry's travail, injected a dose into Mrs. Duncan. It failed to relieve the pain, which, the patient now recalls, "began to feel like knife slashes," particularly at the soles of her feet and in her toes. None of the customary abdominal symptoms was present, however, nor did she experience any difficulty in breathing, circumstances which the hospital physicians thought might be credited to the action of the antivenin. She became delirious the first night and for several days lay prostrated, largely because she was unable to keep any food on her stomach. She made an uneventful recovery but for several weeks suffered from recurrent pain and stiffness in the arm and shoulder where the spider had got her.

With a view to providing an opportunity for complete scientific observation, Dr. A. W. Blair, while a member of the faculty of the University of Alabama, volunteered some years ago to act as guinea pig by letting a black widow bite him. The results of this experiment are set forth in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* for December, 1934. A large and healthy specimen of the spider was caught in a rockpit and placed on the volunteer's hand, where she obligingly bit him three times. In fifteen minutes things began to feel unpleasant locally. In an hour pains of a nature and violence quite outside Dr. Blair's previous experience shot across his neck, chest, and stomach. His breathing was labored and gasping, his heart action slow and weak, he could speak only with difficulty, and his abdomen was as hard as a board. Other physicians took him to the hospital, where his own interest in the case became more personal than scientific.

He turned ashy gray. A cold sweat broke out on him. He could not straighten his body. He was put into a very hot bath and various drugs were administered. For three days he was an exceedingly sick man. Then he began to throw off the poison and in a week was himself again.

"I do not recall having seen more abject pain manifested in any other medical or surgical condition," the attending physician reported of this case.

One purpose of the experiment was to determine whether or not a bitten subject acquired immunity to the venom, as is supposed to be the case with snake-bite. This, of course, called for a repeat performance, but there was none. "I was presented with the opportunity of deciding the point," Dr. Blair has since said, "but lacked the courage to submit myself to a possible repetition of the first experience."

For which, all things considered, he can hardly be criticized.

A couple of years ago there was a brief item in the papers about a Chicago resident who reported the theft of his car to the police of that city. On the

back seat of the machine he had left a satchel and he warned the police that anyone opening it was in for a surprise, as it contained fifty black-widow spiders, collected for laboratory use. So far as I have been able to find out, that was the last that was heard of the case. Presumably the Chicagoan's spider collection had been destined for an experimental laboratory rather than for commercial use, as I am assured by the previously mentioned firm of Sharp & Dohme that no other concern in this country makes black-widow spider serum to sell and that all its spiders come from the vicinity of Philadelphia.

Sharp & Dohme get their black widows from a hardworking amateur arachnologist in Philadelphia, who sometimes picks up as many as two hundred a day. Piles of old boards and small stones are frequently rewarding, as it is in such places that the black widow prefers to weave her web. This is a sprawling arrangement of tough, elastic silk, anywhere from six inches to two yards in diameter, built around a central cone or funnel about the size of a man's finger, into which the spider retires when frightened or when eating. There are several ways in which a collector may bag his prey, the most wily being to tie an insect to the end of a piece of string and dangle it in front of the web until the black widow emerges, thinking to make a kill and retire with it to her lair. The collector then cuts off her means of retreat by breaking up the cone of the web and nabs her with a pair of forceps. Each captured spider is placed in an individual glass container as a precaution against cannibalism and sent to the Sharp & Dohme laboratories in Glenolden, a town south of Philadelphia.

Once there, the black widows are killed by exposing them to the fumes of potassium cyanide and their venom glands are extracted. The glands are dried and ground up in distilled water, which is then filtered. The resulting solution is injected into horses in gradually increasing amounts until the animals show no reaction to the doses, or are, in other words, immune. This process takes from six months to more than a year, depending on the horse, and the immunization of one horse requires the glands of anywhere from fifty to more than a hundred and fifty spiders. A horse that has been made immune becomes a sort of blood donor, a gallon or so of its blood being drawn off at a time and made into antivenin by removing the red and white corpuscles from it. Black-widow antivenin is administered to patients through a hypodermic needle. One injection, if given within an hour or two after the bite, can usually be counted on to stop the spreading of the pain, although as we have seen in the case of Mrs. Duncan, the antivenin does not necessarily assure a complete quick cure.

Two bits of advice may be adduced from all this. First, in case you are bitten by a black-widow spider, run, don't walk, to the nearest hospital, preferably one with an adequate supply of antivenin. Second, bring along the spider as proof; otherwise, you are liable to wake up and find that you have been operated on for an abdominal ulcer that wasn't there.

VAN WYCK BROOKS *Since 1909, Van Wyck Brooks (b. 1886) has been interpreting, not only American literature, but also the political and social developments which lay behind that literature. At first obsessed with the thesis that the spirit of Puritanism was responsible for all that was lacking in our literature, reflected in America's Coming of Age (1915), he appeared to discover a sounder basis of judgment in his later work, particularly in the ambitious series of critical studies which, when completed, will cover our literary history from the beginning. The World of Washington Irving, The Flowering of New England, and New England: Indian Summer have already appeared. The following picture of the early days of national expansion is included in the first of these.*

THE WEST: 1800

ALL ROADS led to Philadelphia, and this largest of the American towns was also the gateway of the West. It was the starting-point for Western traffic; and Bartram's Garden, facing the Schuylkill, a favoured resort of writers and artists, was a microcosm of the wilderness beyond the mountains. There grew and bloomed the plants and trees that had been gathered by the Bartrams on their wide-ranging tours of the prairie and the forest; and there one met the naturalists and the explorers who were drawn to Philadelphia as the centre of thought. Buffon and Linnaeus had a great following in the country, for the study of natural history was a rage of the time; and Frenchmen, Swedes and Germans had hastened to America in search of these great new provinces to be conquered for science.¹ At Bartram's Garden they found a foretaste of the world they had set out to explore, the savannahs of Georgia, the Florida rivers, the far-flung Mississippi valley; and they also found a master there with whom they could discuss their discoveries and trophies.

William Bartram, the Quaker botanist, a painter of flora and fauna, presided over the garden, his birthplace and home. Too frail to travel any longer, for he was in his early sixties, he had been more adventurous even than his father. He had accompanied John Bartram on many of his journeys, in the Catskills, for instance, when he was a boy, and the two had gone to Florida together, where they had explored the St. Johns river. This was in 1766, and William had remained on the river as an indigo-planter. Later, in 1773, he had

"The West: 1800" from *The World of Washington Irving* by Van Wyck Brooks. Published and copyrighted by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York.

¹ "I found that I was now come into a new world. Whenever I looked to the ground, I everywhere found such plants as I had never seen before. When I saw a tree, I was forced to stop and ask those who accompanied me how it was called. I was seized with terror at the thought of ranging so many new and unknown parts of natural history."—Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America*.

Kalm, the Swedish naturalist, one of the earliest of these travellers, expressed a feeling they must all have shared. He had arrived in America in 1748. John Bartram, whom he visited, gave him lessons in the botany of Pennsylvania.

returned to this earthly paradise,—for so it seemed to both the Bartrams,—where he lived five years off and on.² He had ridden on horseback from Savannah, exploring Georgia also and pushing on to Alabama and the banks of the Mississippi, observing the Indian tumuli and the terraces of ancient towns, while he encountered all manner of adventures in the woods. He met a famous Indian murderer who had taken oath to kill the first white man he could find, and Bartram, who was unarmed at the moment, advanced and held his hand out, and the Indian, surprised, made friends with him. He met the Little Carpenter, the emperor of the Cherokees, on a grand progress to Charleston, with his following, through the forest. Bartram stepped out of the path and saluted him gravely, and the chief, with splendid courtesy, shook his hand. He visited planters, reclining on bear-skins, on the banks of flowery streams, with whom he dined on venison, honey and brandy under the live-oak trees. He was present at Indian councils, with Seminoles and Creeks,—among whom he was known as Puc-Puggy, the flower-hunter,—dances of Cherokee maidens and Seminole feasts. He sometimes joined a company of traders, but mostly, during these years, he was alone, sailing up the Florida rivers, mooring his bark and spreading his skins, under some hospitable oak, in a fragrant grove. He roasted his trout and stewed their heads in orange-juice, with a little boiled rice, a wholesome supper; then he hung the rest of his fish on shrubs and reconnoitred for bears and wolves and fell asleep beside his cheerful fire. He was often aroused by the hooting of owls and the screaming of bitterns, or the wood-rats running amongst the leaves, and sometimes the tread of an animal awoke him at midnight. He regaled himself on the strawberry plains and among the interminable orange-groves, a wandering Robinson Crusoe, at home in the woods, rejoicing in the moonlight on the palms, the moan of the surf at night, the glossy leaves of the laurel, the orioles, the doves. Every night beside the fire he jotted down the day's events in a record of these excursions in the land of flowers. He had watched a flock of paroquets hovering and fluttering in a swamp that was alive with otters, snakes and frogs, where the long moss waved from the snags of the trees; or he was enthralled by the whooping-cranes, the squealing water-hens or the mocking-birds in a towering magnolia tree. This native sylvan music, flooding the still evening air, soothed and charmed his ear while his eye was filled with the colours of the sunset streaking the embroidered savannahs. He had encountered a rattlesnake, with eyes red as burning coals, whirring its tail so rapidly that it looked like vapour, while its body swelled with rage, rising and falling, suggesting a bellows, and its parti-coloured skin became speckled and rough and it brandished a forked tongue that might have been a flame. He had observed in some silent lagoon a sudden battle of alligators, rushing forth in combat from the flags and reeds, while cataracts of water fell from their jaws and the earth trembled with their thunder. Or he had sailed day after

² This was shortly after the Florida sojourn of James Macpherson, the "translator" of Ossian. Macpherson spent two years at Pensacola (1764-1766), as secretary to the British general in command there. It has been supposed that he brought his Gaelic manuscripts with him, some of which he lost in Florida.

day over the crystal springs, with innumerable squadrons of fish floating beneath him, distinctly seen through the pellucid water, descending into caverns measureless to man, secret meandering rivers and fathomless fountains.

Numbers of these images, which appeared in Bartram's *Travels*, reappeared in some of the world's great poems; for when the book was published, in 1791, it opened a new scene for romancers and poets. It passed into the mind of Coleridge, whence it reëmerged in two or three splendid passages of *Kubla Khan*. There one found the jetting fountains and the incense-bearing trees, together with other reminders of the Isle of Palms; and Bartram's wondrous fishes, attired in gold, red, blue and green, appeared in *The Ancient Mariner* as water-snakes. Wordsworth, too, read the book, and these pictures of the tropical forest passed into his poems, the green savannahs, the endless lakes, the fair trees, the gorgeous flowers, the magnolias, the azaleas that "set the hills on fire" in *Ruth*. There one found the Indian maidens gathering strawberries in the wood, while Wordsworth's *Prelude* also bore traces of Bartram. Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming* was full of scenes from Bartram, and more than fifty passages in Chateaubriand's *Les Natchez* were drawn directly from his pages.³

Among the visitors at Bartram's Garden were William Dunlap, the New Yorker, who called upon the naturalist with Charles Brockden Brown. They found him, rake in hand, with his old hat flopping over his face, breaking the clods of earth in a tulip-bed. He was dressed in a waistcoat and leather breeches, and his shoes were tied with leather strings, and his expression was benign and happy. He talked with the politeness and ease of one of nature's noblemen. He had kept Alexander Wilson at the garden for months. This melancholy Scotchman, with the long hooked nose and the dreamy face, whose fame as "the Ornithologist" soon spread through the world, had found in Bartram not only a friend but a careful instructor in drawing and painting. Wilson had made crude drawings as a youth in Scotland. There, as a rebel Paisley weaver, he had been imprisoned and forced to burn some of his satires in the public square, for he was also a poet, and even a good one. Indeed, for many decades he was one of the standard poets of Scotland.⁴ He had roamed there as a pedlar, with a pack full of muslins, silks and prints, collecting subscriptions for his poems, but feeling, as he said, a vague terror in the air, he had made his way to America and opened a school. Before he settled at Gray's Ferry, in the "bridge-built hollow" on the Schuylkill, described in *The Solitary Tutor*, he had crossed New Jersey as a pedlar and taught in a school near Newark, printing some of his poems in a newspaper there. He had also

³ When Coleridge and Southey, reading Bartram, thought for a while of leaving England in order to live on the banks of the Susquehanna, they took it for granted that they would find there the scenery, flowers and birds of Florida. Thus Campbell, in *Gertrude of Wyoming*, which was largely based on Bartram, placed "hills with high magnolia," broad savannahs and the meteor-like flamingo in a valley that was also on the Susquehanna.

⁴ Alexander Wilson's poems were continuously in print throughout the nineteenth century in Scotland, and there was no better poet in America during the years in which he lived and died here (1794-1813). He was especially known in Scotland for his Burns-like *Watty and Meg*. Among his good American poems were *The Solitary Tutor*, *The Osprey*, *The Foresters* and *The Blue Bird*.

given lessons in English to a French exile from Santo Domingo. But teaching for him was a prisoner's life, born as he was to ramble; and ever since, in the Delaware forest, he had seen the wondrous woodpecker, he had longed to describe and paint the American birds. Bartram had befriended him, taken him into his old stone house and cheered and raised him out of the slough of despond; and Bartram and his niece Ann had given Wilson prints of flowers to copy. He soon drew a picture of a humming-bird feeding. Bartram in his *Travels* had counted two hundred and fifteen birds, as Jefferson, in the *Notes on Virginia*, had counted one hundred and nine, the only list that rivalled his at present, and he told Wilson all he knew about them, begging him to complete the list and undertake an ornithology that would please the President as much as himself. Wilson, who taught school by day, could only draw by candle-light, but he made rapid headway with the help of Bartram, who presently introduced him to the Philadelphia men of science and whose garden Wilson pictured in *The Rural Walk*. In this little paradise, as the grateful Wilson called it, he counted fifty-one pairs of birds building their nests in a single summer. His room there was a Noah's ark, full of live hawks, opossums, lizards and owls. The school-boys brought him baskets of crows and other little creatures, and he trained himself in accurate observation. Once a captive mouse filled him with compassion, inspiring a passage of prose that was worthy of Burns.⁵ Once Bartram turned a jay loose in his greenhouse, feeding him with corn, and Wilson watched him breaking the kernels, after they fell from his bill, by placing them in a corner where they could not slip.

In 1804, less than five years before the appearance of his first volume, Wilson showed Bartram his first collection of birds. He was eager for a word of criticism, and he was not yet familiar with the names of the birds. He asked Bartram to write the names under his pictures. But he soon knew far more than his master. In this same year he set out for Niagara, a two-months' walk through the woods and the snow, during which he crossed high mountains and dangerous rivers. He had never explored such wild country, and, accustomed as he was to walking,—for before he arrived in America he had covered more than three-fourths of Scotland,—this was a trial trip to prove his endurance. He described it in *The Foresters*, a long poem, and on his return he presented a bluejay to Peale's Museum and sent the President in Washington two drawings of birds. Jefferson replied at once. He was deeply interested, for he had just seen one of these birds, which a neighbour had killed and brought him, and he urged Wilson to search for another, resembling one described by Buffon, of which he had caught a fleeting glimpse. Then Wilson set out on a longer journey, hoping that Bartram would join him, but his good friend

⁵ "One of my boys caught a mouse in school, a few days ago, and directly marched up to me with his prisoner. I set about drawing it that same evening, and all the while the pantings of its little heart showed it to be in the most extreme agonies of fear. I had intended to kill it, in order to fix it in the claws of a stuffed owl, but happening to spill a few drops of water near where it was tied, it lapped it up with such eagerness and looked in my face with such an eye of supplicating terror as perfectly overcame me. I immediately untied it, and returned it to life and liberty . . . Insignificant as the object was, I felt at that moment the sweet sensations that mercy leaves on the mind when she triumphs over cruelty."—Letter of Alexander Wilson.

and adviser was too old for this. He walked out to Pittsburgh and embarked in a skiff, which he called the "Ornithologist," down the Ohio, reckoning his expenses at a dollar a day; and before he completed the journey he had passed through Louisville and New Orleans and made his way to Florida by horseback. Exposed, in his skiff, to the rain, he had used his greatcoat to cover his specimens, together with his fowling-piece and drawings; and he had passed Kentucky boats, laden with muslins and shawls, heaped on counters on their decks, announcing their approach, as they drew up at a settlement, with a tin trumpet or horn blown by the steersman. He slept on the shore on deerskins, in Chickasaw huts, with his portmanteau for a pillow; and he plodded on foot or on horseback through horrid swamps and sluggish creeks, up to his horse's belly in water and mire. His pockets were crammed with the skins of birds, and a Carolina paroquet was his sole companion. He carried the little bird in a handkerchief, setting it free at meal-times, and it learned to creep into his coat and emerge when he stopped; it perched on his shoulder, ate from his mouth and even responded to its name, and it always amused the Indians whom he passed on his way. To beguile his lonesome march he played Scottish airs on his flute, smiling to think, as he wrote to Bartram, that while others were immersed in schemes, purchasing plantations and building towns, he was entranced in contemplation over the plumage of a lark or gazing like a lover at an owl.

When at last in 1808 Wilson published his first volume, letters, drawings and sketches of birds poured in upon him from every quarter. Especially in the Northern states, he had so many correspondents that scarcely a wren or a tit, he said, was able to reach the Canadian border before he had received intelligence of it. But in the South as well he had two hundred and fifty subscribers. At \$120 a set, for the volumes still to come, this was a proof of his triumph; and when Meriwether Lewis returned from his great expedition, he told Wilson about the birds of the further West. Wilson, to collect subscribers, visited every seaboard town from the Saint Lawrence to Savannah. With his red-bound quarto in his hand, he called on the reverend doctors at Princeton, Yale and Dartmouth, although some of the professors of natural history whom he met scarcely knew a hawk from a handsaw. In Maryland the legislators were enthusiastic about his work,—he found many subscribers at the Annapolis state-house; and in every town he interviewed the "literary characters" and stopped at houses that indicated a measure of wealth and taste. The bird-biographies that accompanied his pictures, written in the woods, as often as not, in the presence of the birds that he was describing, were full of exact observation. His writing abounded in picturesque detail, although he had none of Bartram's felicity of style. There was no living American novelist who could make people as real as Alexander Wilson made his birds.

Wilson and Bartram were only two of the many naturalists who were exploring the West, the land of marvels, of which the Mississippi was the Ultima Thule. There were dozens of foreign disciples of Linnaeus and Buffon for whom their own countries were a twice-told tale and who were enchanted by

this whole new world of flora and fauna, of humming-birds and mocking-birds, whippoorwills and orioles, and trees, beasts, flowers and insects unknown in Europe. The West at no point touched the Eastern settlements. A hundred miles of mountainous country lay between the regions, enough to breed wonderful tales of the fabulous land. One heard of watermelons as large as houses and trees on the Miami river in which honey grew, springs of rum and brandy that gushed from the Kentucky hills and flax-plants that bore woven cloth in their branches. With these humorous yarns were mingled others that might have been true; and how was a credulous Easterner to draw the line? Was there not really perhaps a hoop-snake that spun through the swamps like a wheel, a whip-snake that killed cattle with the lashing of its tail and a serpent that exhaled a fatal gas? These tall tales that crossed the mountains were true as intimations that almost anything indeed might happen in the West. The West possessed the largest rivers; and were not the storms more terrible there, were not the bears more dangerous than anywhere else? Moreover, the true frontiersman, whom one sometimes saw in Philadelphia, striding through the streets with the step of an Achilles, suggested that he could manage the storms and the bears. So felt the little town-boys who observed the erect Kentuckian, with his brawny limbs and sunburnt face, with the blanket over his shoulder and the dirk at his waist, quick to resent, disdainful of control, the picture of hardihood, confidence, prowess and will. With what an air of good-natured superciliousness he glanced at the fragile butterflies of fashion about him. No tales about the West could ever seem tall to anyone who saw him with a rifle. He could perforate a milk-pail half a mile away, he could enlarge the tin eye of the cock on the steeple, he could split a bullet on a razor at a hundred paces and cut the string of a flag at three hundred yards. This William Tell was a walking and visible legend.

Fabulous as the West was, there were untold thousands of people who knew it. Indeed, in 1800, almost half a million of them lived already west of the Alleghanies. Pittsburgh was a largish town, Kentucky swarmed with pioneers, and Cincinnati, Marietta and Chillicothe in Ohio were rapidly growing outposts of civilization. Covered wagons crawled along the highways, heading for the Wabash or the Scioto, with their furniture, family Bibles and Watts's hymn-books; and the settlers sent black lumber, wheat and potash in exchange for molasses, hoes, axes, pots and clothes. The Yankee pedlars followed, with clocks, knives, latches, ribbons, essences and books; and, while the ubiquitous log-cabin was the typical dwelling everywhere, one never could tell what a year might produce in the way of an architectural wonder. There was the house, for instance, on Blennerhassett's island, not far from Marietta, in the middle of the Ohio, which was built in the style of a Persian pavilion, with wings, walks, lawns and gardens, and had cost about as much as a fair-sized town. Two roads crossed Pennsylvania, and there was a highway through Virginia to Knoxville, Tennessee, with a branch to Kentucky, by way of the Cumberland Gap,⁶ and there were other trails through the Carolinas; while

⁶ Represented in the painting by the "Missouri artist," George Caleb Bingham, "Daniel Boone Coming through Cumberland Gap."

many of the New Englanders went west along the Great Lakes, passing through Albany and Troy. But for Northern emigrants Pittsburgh was the most popular gate of the West, for thence the Ohio flowed to the Mississippi. The shores of the Monongahela and the Alleghany that formed the Belle Rivière were lined with keelboats, flatboats, broadhorns and arks, and there one heard already the clang of hammers and the winter snow mingled with the soft-coal smoke that rose from forge and furnace. There, as in other frontier towns, all manner of human beings gathered, trappers, Indian hunters, traders, boatmen, together with German professors, French nobles in exile and the families of American officers of the Revolution. Beyond the great sycamore groves and the chimneys and coal-hills lay the unbroken forests of the Indian country.

There lived the novelist Hugh Henry Brackenridge, whose *Modern Chivalry* was the first work that was printed west of the Alleghanies.⁷ A poor Scottish boy, like Alexander Wilson, Brackenridge had been brought to this country at five. From a farm in Pennsylvania he had found his way to Princeton, where he had been a classmate of Philip Freneau. An excellent classical scholar, he had written with Freneau in college a long heroic American historical poem, and the two had opened a school in Maryland and both had edited magazines a few years later in Philadelphia. Then Brackenridge had set up as a lawyer in Pittsburgh, where there were hundreds of speculators in Western lands; and, like David Crockett later, he defended the rights of the small settlers against the claimants who had not cleared the land. An ardent Jeffersonian, he also defended the "Whiskey Boys" in their struggle against Hamilton's excise law; for the whiskey that was distilled from their grain was their only medium of exchange, and in these conditions the excise was plainly unfair. But Brackenridge, the democrat, had no illusions about the people, and because he wished democracy to succeed and endure he wrote the satire *Modern Chivalry* to point out the follies that might lead to its overthrow and failure. He described himself in Captain Farrago, the Pennsylvania Quixote, who travels to Philadelphia with the bog-trotter Teague, his Irish valet and Sancho Panza who cannot read or write and finds himself acclaimed as an oracle and a sage. Teague almost becomes a legislator, a lawyer, a preacher, an editor and a member of the cabinet in the republican court. With his low humour and sharp tongue, there is nothing to which he does not aspire, and the people, who are "not always right," abet him. He is taken up by the world of fashion, and he teaches Greek at the university, and the Philosophical Society elects him a member.⁸ A satire alike on demagogues and ignorant voters, as on duelling, Billingsgate journalism, crudity and pre-

⁷ The third volume of this novel was published in Pittsburgh in 1793. The two previous volumes were published at Philadelphia. In later volumes Brackenridge lost the thread of the story, and the work trailed off into the rambling reflections of a lonely frontier lawyer.

⁸ Brackenridge had small respect for this august society, and he wished, by means of his satire, to correct its standards. He was convinced that it admitted "a spurious brood of illiterate persons" as members. One of them, he says, got in by finding the tail of a rabbit, another by means of the stretched scalp of a squirrel, a third by the beard of a fox, dried in the sun. Perhaps this was not an unfair presentation of the low average standards of the early American learned societies.

tension, the work was meant to educate the gullible frontier in the interests of honesty, intelligence, wisdom and learning. And this comic picture of society was as good as its moral. The "lack-learning settlements," the village fairs and tavern life were described in a clear, firm, eighteenth-century prose, with the masculine frankness of language that characterized Americans before they began to ask what the neighbours might say.

To be a writer on the frontier was to feel oneself an exile.⁹ The types that thrived were the heroes of the writers of the future. At Pittsburgh, for twelve years, lived John Chapman of Massachusetts, the well-known "Johnny Appleseed" of the later stories, who had bought an apple-orchard in 1798, while he was working in the shipyards. Chapman, the son of a carpenter, had been a pedlar in New England, and he had wandered westward with his pack and his gun, tending orchards on the way. He had stopped for a while at Coopers-town, when Fenimore Cooper was a small boy, and he was to follow the frontier far beyond Pittsburgh. He carried apple-seeds from the cider-presses, which he planted in Indiana and Ohio, and the wilderness bore flowers and fruit wherever he passed. As the first nurseryman in the Ohio valley, he became a sort of orchard-god, who sowed as he went and vanished at last into the far new West.¹⁰ Others became mythical figures while they were still living. One of these was Mike Fink, whom Chapman knew in Pittsburgh and whom the novelist Brackenridge must have known. Born there in a log-cabin, brought up on bear's meat and venison, this frontier Jack the Giant Killer was the "King of the Keelboatmen." He could drink a gallon of whiskey in twenty-four hours, and he was supposed to have eaten a buffalo-skin. A humorist and a practical joker, he could out-run, brag and fight all the other salt-river roarers. From the middle of the Mississippi he could shoot the tails off pigs, and he was a champion gouger and the terror of pirates, and his oaths were fireworks of language, bombs and rockets of coloured sound. Moreover, as poleman and steersman of keelboats, of which he became the great patroon, he was a wonder-worker in his daring and skill. There was no one like Mike Fink for dodging snags, bars, islands of driftwood or for mastering the wild cross-currents of the Mississippi. He was the forerunner of the race of river-pilots whom Mark Twain was to celebrate in after days.

There were two thousand miles of river between Pittsburgh and New Orleans, a serpentine whispering-gallery of fantasy and rumour; and there

⁹ "Nature intended me for a writer . . . How often have I sighed for the garrets of London; where I have read histories, manners and anecdotes of Otway, Dryden and others, who have lived in the upper stories of buildings, writing paragraphs, or essays in prose and verse. I have lamented my hard fate that I was not one of these."—H. H. Brackenridge, Pittsburgh, 1793.

¹⁰ Long, long after,
When settlers put up beam and rafter,
They asked of the birds, "Who gave this fruit?
Who watched this fence till the seeds took root?
Who gave these boughs?" They asked the sky,
And there was no reply.
But the robin might have said,
"To the farthest West he has followed the sun,
His life and his empire just begun."
—Vachel Lindsay, *In Praise of Johnny Appleseed*.

for many years to come tales of border heroes and backwoods Jasons were told by the swaggering boatmen at their forest campfires. Mike Fink was famous up and down the rivers, and so was Simon Kenton, the Ohio scout,¹¹ the paladin of countless exploits, mythical and real; while Daniel Boone was already known in Europe. The Kentucky historian John Filson, whose work had appeared in French and German, had spread the renown of this actual Robinson Crusoe. Boone, another Adam in a sylvan paradise, had bestowed names on rivers, lakes and mountains, and he had told his own story in Filson's little book, which attracted many an immigrant to the woods of Kentucky. Alone, without bread or salt or horse, he had emerged in the blue-grass region, a land of running waters, groves and glades, and he had roved the sunny valleys, kindling his fire by a mountain stream and feasting on the loin of a buck. Hundreds of men had hunted in Kentucky before Daniel Boone set foot there,—never to be lost, though once “bewildered,”—but this grave and noble woodsman, the prototype of Natty Bumppo, “happy in the midst of dangers,” caught the world's fancy. He was the “free forester” whom Byron acclaimed in *Don Juan*, the “happiest among mortals anywhere,” the personification of the new Eden, innocent and serene, that many a poet saw on the wild frontier.¹² Numbers of communities were to rise along the rivers,—Rapp's settlement, for one, on the Ohio,—to realize this dream of a wilderness Eden. Some of the French settlers at Gallipolis shared it, those exiled royalist artisans from Paris and Lyons, peruke-makers and coachmakers, carvers and gilders to the king, who were victims of the sorry Scioto scheme. This Gallipolitan bubble had burst, but still, on the flatboats and keelboats, one sometimes met a French philosopher in search of the primitive innocence of the forest children. Chateaubriand had found it in the Indian girls of Florida, fragrant as the orange-trees and flowers, with their oval faces and long eyes and their black hair plaited with posies and rushes, with whom for him the world began anew. He too had traversed the Mississippi, which he described in splendid prose, extolling the virtues of the red men, and his *Atala* captivated the French as nothing had done since *Paul and Virginia*, that earlier glorification of nature and freedom.¹³

The woody wilderness of Ohio, which became a state in 1802, still wit-

¹¹ Simon Kenton appeared in the character of Ralph Stackpole in Robert Montgomery Bird's *Nick of the Woods*.

¹² Though born on the cheating banks of Thames—
 Though his waters bathed my infant limbs—
 The Ohio shall wash his stains from me;
 I was born a slave, but I go to be free.
 —William Blake, *Thames and Ohio*.

¹³ *Atala* was published in 1800. Like *René*, it was originally planned as an episode of *Les Natchez*, Chateaubriand's prose epic on the life of the red men. Chateaubriand's account of his American travels was largely fictitious, and he said that his transcriptions from Bartram's *Travels* were so confused with his own notes that he did not know how much was his own composition. He made rough draughts of *Atala* and *René* in London, sitting under the trees in Kensington Gardens; then, joining the army on the Rhine, he carried the manuscripts in his knapsack and revised them during halts in the campaign.

Chateaubriand and his story are commemorated in the names of Attala County, Mississippi, and the town of Attalla, Alabama.

nessed, in the name of Gnadenhütten, an older Utopian hope in the forest clearings. This was the Moravian settlement where the Christian Indians had been so hideously massacred by the whites; but Salem was soon to be founded by Quakers, and Ohio was already launched on its long career of a relatively peaceful progress. Settled by New Englanders largely, it was known as New Connecticut, or, as the Kentuckians said, the Yankee state, abounding, as they further said, in the usual tricks of the Yankees, gin that was made by putting pine-knots in their whiskey, pit-coal indigo and wooden nutmegs. Cleveland was a mere cluster of cabins, but the pride of the state, Marietta, was a backwoods seaport, where ships were built that sailed as far as Russia. As one approached the Mississippi, passing Louisville, the signs of an old French culture multiplied, and the shores of the turbulent Father of Waters were dotted here and there with little French villages and towns. Up the river lay St. Louis and Ste. Geneviève, and far, far down one came to Natchez, together with Natchez-under-the-Hill, the Suez of the West, with its long winding road that was lined with bar-rooms, brothels and gamblers' dens. There were no Ten Commandments in Natchez-under-the-Hill, but beautiful plantation-houses were scattered through the town above, with classic statues lining the drives and gardens laid out by French designers. It was the ancient village of the Natchez tribe, with memories of De Soto, who found it here and who was supposed to have been buried in the river near by. In all these towns one found dim traces of the Jesuit missionaries who had appeared there five generations before, floating in their bark canoes through unknown waters and singing mass to the savages in the shadow of the forest. One heard old French songs there, and one found fine cooking and dancing-schools, the piety of the French Canadians and the manners of Versailles; for among the farmers and fur-traders there were cultivated émigrés, "poor, polite and harmonious," as Meriwether Lewis called them. The older inhabitants had never heard of the French Revolution and only remembered the reign of Louis Quatorze.

All these towns still belonged to the Louisiana territory, which became a part of the Union in 1803; and meanwhile Kentucky was the most advanced of the Western regions, while Tennessee, on the southern border, was also rapidly taking form. They had both been admitted as states in the seventennineties. Kentucky was the thoroughfare for the northern and western settlement of southern Indiana and Illinois; and Lexington, with three thousand inhabitants, the largest of the Western towns, was sometimes known already as the "Athens of the West." There Transylvania University had been established for several years, and there was the oldest Western newspaper and the first Western printing-press. This press had been carted over the mountains in 1787 and floated in an ark down-river from Pittsburgh, and copies of the newspaper were distributed by post-riders far and wide through the forest. They were read in hundreds of cabins, and the news they contained was declaimed from stumps. The editor cut his own illustrations from dogwood. William Wirt, in the *British Spy*, mourned over the waste of talent in the Western regions, perishing there for want of culture, and indeed, beyond the Bible

and Aesop's Fables, an occasional life of Franklin or the *Pilgrim's Progress*, broadcast by the pedlars, books were few. But at Lexington one could buy at the bookstore, even before 1800, not only most of the modern authors but Virgil, Horace, Ovid and Sallust; and in the little backwoods papers that appeared in all the surrounding regions there was usually a poets' corner, "Sacred to the Muses." In Lexington lived Henry Clay, the poor Virginia minister's son who had worked as a boy in a store at Richmond and who had moved to Kentucky in 1797. As a clerk in the office of George Wythe, with whom Jefferson also had studied, Clay had grown up in the Jeffersonian school, and he was to enter the national Senate in 1806, when the fame of this "Harry of the West" soon spread through the country. The most remarkable man in Kentucky, hot-blooded and warm-hearted, generous, exuberant, gay, with a musical voice, he practised his oratory in the Lexington cornfields, in the woods and under the rafters of his big barn. His Tennessee neighbour Andrew Jackson had already been a senator. He had resigned in 1798, and he kept a store in Nashville, where he had a plantation. Already a large land-owner, and also a radical Jeffersonian, he lived there in a frame-house when even the court-house was a log-cabin. A South Carolinian by birth and a natural lover of war and sport, Jackson was a great hand at cards, cock-fighting and raising colts. He was a notable duellist, and this fiery and bellicose man had a passion for the turf; and he thought nothing of riding to Washington, like many another member of Congress, whether from Georgia, Kentucky, Connecticut or Maine.¹⁴ Another young Scotch-Irishman¹⁵ who was growing up in Tennessee had hunted "varmints" there since the age of six, and after his father gave him a rifle, when he was eight years old, he went without his dinner if he missed his shot. This was David Crockett, the Tennessee Hercules of the future, who was fourteen in 1800. His father, like Daniel Boone, was a keeper of one of those backwoods taverns where hunters and trappers gathered and swapped their tall tales, and Davy not only became in time a prince of story-tellers but he was a great dancer all his life. What he liked at country frolics was "none of your straddling, mincing, sadying, but a regular sifter, cut-the-buckle, chicken-flutter set-to." Davy, who had only a few months of schooling, had been bound out to a drover who was taking his cattle over the range. He knew the lonely Blue Ridge trail and had travelled as far as Baltimore, and he was already a champion at shooting-matches.

David Crockett, famous later, was a type of the backwoods pioneers who were settling Tennessee and Kentucky, some of whom assumed from instinct

¹⁴ Even the families of Congressmen sometimes rode with them to Washington from the remotest corners of the country. In order to enjoy the gaieties of the capital, the daughter of one senator in 1801 rode with her father five hundred miles on horseback. The wife of another member of Congress rode fifteen hundred miles, passing many nights in the open forest.

"Hardly in anything is there so strong a difference between the inhabitants of this country and those of England and Ireland as in their ideas of travelling. A journey of two or three hundred miles here is less thought of than an excursion of forty or fifty miles in Ireland."—Letter of Matthew Carey, 1789.

¹⁵ Besides Andrew Jackson and David Crockett, there were many notable Americans of Scotch-Irish descent,—Robert Fulton, Daniel Boone, John C. Calhoun, Samuel Houston, James K. Polk and Horace Greeley.

the Indian dress and the Indian ways, others for protection, others from choice. They usually wore green hunting-shirts with fringes, deerskin moccasins, leggings and coon-skin caps; and they had pushed out from the Carolinas or down through West Virginia, joining their kinsmen who had crossed the Pennsylvania range. Among them were broken-down aristocrats who were starting life anew in the West and who shared the desire for a proud isolation that characterized the Southern planters;¹⁶ and, as for the pioneers generally, while many were people of culture and character,¹⁷ others were refugees from Eastern justice. There was one Kentucky county that was called "Rogues' Harbour," where murderers, horse-thieves and highway robbers were supposed to have formed a majority. The frontier was tumultuous, and the freedom of this ungoverned country demoralized many an exile from the stable East; and gouging, gambling, the wildest vice thrived in the Kentucky woods, together with a measure of drunkenness that was pictured as frightful. All this went with a sort of harmless showing off, as if their unbounded freedom had gone to men's heads, and they leaped on stumps and flapped their arms, crowing in spread-eagle fashion, while they challenged every comer to a fight.¹⁸ Their frolics were uproarious, while the lonely and perilous frontier life was favourable to emotional religion; and Kentucky was the scene of the first American camp-meeting, the Great Revival of 1800 that took place at Cane Ridge. In this world of pioneers who were largely Scotch-Irish by descent, the Presbyterian church was the cult of the rich, but the Methodists, following the Baptists, appealed to the people, for they preached free will and universal grace. In every sense equalitarians, they spoke to the lowly and outcast also,¹⁹ and the Great Revival continued for several years. A team of preachers came together, as many as twenty or thirty, and preached for four or five days, by day and by night, and sometimes for three or four weeks, while twenty or thirty thousand persons assembled in wagons or on horseback, emerging from their tents at the sound of the trumpet. They lighted their way with blazing hickory bark, and the red glare of the campfires was reflected from the tents, surrounded by the blackness of the shadows and the forest; and one

¹⁶ "It was a saying of the venerable Macon of North Carolina, the American Cato, that he never wished to live so near another as to be within hearing of the bark of his dog."—H. M. Brackenridge, *Recollections of the West*.

¹⁷ For instance, H. M. Brackenridge, the son of the novelist Brackenridge, who spent his whole life along the frontier. Brought up to read Latin, Greek and French, he later learned German, Italian and Spanish and became an author and a judge, a legislator and diplomat. He settled for a while at Baton Rouge and became an intimate friend there of the bibliophile Don Juan Lopez. He was a man of all but universal cultivation and curiosity, and his *Recollections of the West* is a charming book. Byron first heard of Daniel Boone from his *Views of Louisiana*, published in England. This younger Brackenridge was mentioned at some length in Washington Irving's *Astoria*.

¹⁸ "I'm a ring-tailed squealer . . . I'm a gentleman, and my name's *Fight*. Foot and hand, tooth and nail, claw and mud-scraper, knife, gun and tomahawk, or any other way you choose to take me, I'm your man! Cock-a-doodle-doo!"—jumping into the air and flapping his wings.—Roaring Ralph Stackpole, supposed to have been drawn from Simon Kenton, in Robert Montgomery Bird's *Nick of the Woods*.

¹⁹ Come hungry, come thirsty, come ragged, come bare,
Come filthy, come lousy, come just as you are.

—Camp-meeting Song.

heard the sobs and shrieks of the downcast mingling with the shouts of praise of those who had crossed the threshold of the land of Beulah. A hundred victims would fall like dead men under one powerful sermon, while the groans of the "spiritually wounded" echoed through the woods, and three thousand "slain" were laid in rows at the first Cane Ridge meeting in order that they might not be trampled on. The women cast away their locket, earrings and gold chains, dropping stiff and bereft of their senses when the preacher pointed his finger at them or felled a group or a crowd with a sweep of his arm. He set them dancing, laughing, barking and jerking. Sometimes the camp-meetings were broken up by drunken rowdies, armed with horsewhips, dirks, knives and clubs, who dashed in a wild cavalcade through the worshipping throng. In general, they were "holy fairs," the great events of rural society throughout the southwestern regions, though less in Ohio. The Yankees, as Peter Cartwright said, did not like loud and zealous sermons, and they brought on their learned preachers to crush the "sons of thunder" and put them to shame.²⁰

But some of these were mighty men. They were even remarkable writers, too, and a handful of their journals were perhaps the most interesting books that arose from the turbulent Western life of the time.²¹ Aside from the dignified Francis Asbury, who disliked all eccentricity, the noble Peter Cartwright was the greatest of them, and they all roamed from region to region, with or without road or path, with stools for chairs and dirt floors for carpets, sleeping on bear and buffalo skins. The oddest and the most notorious was the freelance Methodist holy man "Crazy Dow,"—called, for short, Lorenzo,—who jogged on his horse through the rain or trudged on foot, hairy and dirty, with his raiment flapping behind him. By birth a Connecticut Yankee, Lorenzo Dow was a fortune-teller, a miracle-worker, a seer, an interpreter of dreams, who had been converted in 1793, when he was struck down by a vision of prophets and angels. He saw the glory of paradise and the fury of hell, and he set forth "to sound the alarm to the fallen race of Adam," accompanied in later years by his "rib," Peggy. A voice from heaven told him to conquer Romish Ireland, and, making his way to Quebec in a leaky canoe, he sailed thence to Dublin, where he shouted against popery and scattered his handbills in the streets. Returning home, he repaired to Georgia, following the path of the Wesleys, and then to Mississippi and Alabama, where he preached the first Protestant sermon that was heard in the state; and there was scarcely a Southern hamlet in which a boy did not appear, announcing from his horse

²⁰ "I do not wish to undervalue education, but really I have seen so many of these educated preachers who forcibly reminded me of lettuce growing under the shade of a peach-tree, or like a gosling that had got the straddles by wading in the dew, that I turn away sick and faint . . . We could not, many of us, conjugate a verb or parse a sentence, and murdered the king's English almost every lick."—*Autobiography of Peter Cartwright*. But sometimes, as Cartwright said, these preachers had "divine unction."

²¹ See especially Cartwright's *Autobiography*, an eloquent and moving work in the Biblical style. Although it was probably "ghost-written," it was full of pioneer words and phrases. Its lively, direct and pungent language conveyed Cartwright's volcanic feeling. The *Journal* of Lorenzo Dow, published first in 1804, was sold widely by pedlars. The *Journal* of the scholarly Francis Asbury is also interesting.

that Lorenzo was coming. Then the "eccentric cosmopolite" would emerge from the woods, melancholy, tall and cadaverous, with his long black cloak and reddish beard and the wild hair streaming over his shoulders. He bore in one hand a staff and a Bible in the other. Meanwhile, Peter Cartwright remained for half a century the most famous and the grandest of the backwoods preachers. This naturally wild and wicked boy, as he called himself in his *Autobiography*, was converted by a heavenly voice in 1801. The voice said, "Peter, look at me," and he straightway gave up cards and dancing and turned his race-horse over to his father. Then he set out as the "boy preacher," living on forty dollars a year, with whatever food and clothing his followers gave him. Preaching, along with weightier matters, decency, temperance and cleanliness, he had the natural eloquence of the prophets of old. He suggested to his listeners the cry of the wildcat, the falling of trees in the forest and the thunderous tread of the buffalo herd on the prairie.

This double-barrelled "old religion," as people called it in later years, was to leave profound impressions on the character of the West. Evoked by the life of the pioneers, it expressed the race, the place, the moment, and its narrowness and grimness, together with its joys and terrors, very largely shaped the Western mind, which remained by turns repressive and explosive. Even five generations later the literature of the Middle West was coloured and scarred by the traces of this old religion; while the Western mind had already assumed in other ways by 1800 the forms that later generations knew. The pioneers who crossed the mountains soon lost all recollection of Europe,—they had no sympathy whatever with things European;²² and they were defiant equalitarians, sullenly hostile to rank and pretension, who distrusted any kind of special training. Largely, too, they distrusted education, for they connected this with aristocratic ostentation and the claims of superior persons, bosses and snobs.

More than a century later one found the remnants of these notions in many of the writers who came from the Middle West; and other Western traits were clearly established by 1804, when the Lewis and Clark expedition so greatly extended the content and conception of the West. Up to that time the Mississippi had virtually marked the Western border, but when Jefferson acquired the Louisiana territory he added to the Union the area of thirteen states.²³ Parts of this country were sparsely peopled by the men who had settled the earlier wilderness, and the French could never have held it against their advance; and both the South and the West pressed Jefferson to secure the mouth of the Mississippi, which controlled the better part of the Western trade. Jefferson had always longed for a closer knowledge of the West,—he had dreamed of carrying the American flag to the Pacific,—and he had sug-

²² Especially, perhaps, no sympathy with England, and for another reason that Cooper explains: "There was not probably a portion of the earth where less sympathy was to be found for England than in Kentucky, or, in short, along the whole Western frontier of America, where, right or wrong, the people attribute most of the Indian wars to the instigation of that power."—J. Fenimore Cooper, *A Residence in France*.

²³ Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota.

gested expeditions to John Ledyard, André Michaux and George Rogers Clark, which came to nothing. His private secretary Meriwether Lewis already knew much of this further West when Jefferson obtained the approval of Congress for the great expedition of 1802. Lewis, the Virginian, went to Philadelphia to prepare for the expedition by a study of science, and he set out in 1803 with a party of forty-five men from Pittsburgh and joined William Clark at Louisville. Clark, a brother of George Rogers Clark, had been a comrade of Lewis in some of the Indian campaigns of Anthony Wayne. A number of Kentuckians, "robust, healthy, hardy young men," joined the expedition at St. Louis, and they started in May, 1804, to explore the headwaters of the Missouri and find a route to the Pacific. Then in 1805 and 1806, Jefferson also dispatched Captain Zebulon Pike of New Jersey on two expeditions. One was to explore the upper Mississippi, the other the springs of the Arkansas and the Rio Grande. Pike found Pike's Peak and explored the vast vague country southward. His task was to settle the line of the Mexican border.

The Lewis and Clark expedition excited the country as Raleigh and Hakluyt excited the people of England, for it disclosed an unknown world of mystery and marvels and opened it up for enterprise, settlement and thought. Ascending the Missouri, the party followed the Jefferson Fork, then crossed the divide of the Rockies and descended westward till it reached the Columbia river and at last the Pacific; and its quiet and disciplined progress was a tribute to the leaders, their deep regard for each other and their fatherly care of the men. Lewis was instinctively a writer and thinker and a well-trained lover of natural history. Now and then, stirred by a noble scene, he expressed himself in eloquent prose, and he often longed for the pencil of Salvator Rosa. Clark, the draughtsman of the party, made all the maps and careful drawings of the birds, fishes and animals they discovered on the way. Both wrote separate journals, encouraging the others to write as well, and four additional journals were kept by the sergeants; for Jefferson had begged them for accurate scientific data, and all the journals abounded in fresh observations. Many of the birds and animals were altogether unknown to science, and one or another first described the Rocky Mountain rat, the mountain goat, the American antelope, a snail and two new kinds of grouse. They discovered the Lewis woodpecker and the Clark nutcracker, and they gave the first adequate descriptions of the prairie dog, the coyote and the Western grizzly bear. They preserved specimens of plants, observed the ways of the wild geese and found a fish that yielded a quart of oil. From time to time they made up packages to be sent to Jefferson, antelope skins and skeletons, plants and roots, wolf skeletons, deer-horns, weasel skins and buffalo robes, a foxskin, bows and arrows and painted Indian robes and pottery. Some of these were later shown at Monticello, while others were deposited in Peale's Museum. They also recorded the vocabularies of some of the Indians, who had never seen guns and were frightened by the burning-glass which the expedition used for making fires. In camp they feasted on fine trout and buffaloes' humps and marrowbones; and they dressed skins for their clothes and danced

and sang. Meanwhile, the young men were sometimes fractious and misbehaved with the tawny damsels.

Most of the notes on natural history were omitted by the editor who wove the various journals together in a readable paraphrase: indeed, it was not for a hundred years that readers ever saw their elaborate and remarkable descriptions of the creatures of the West. But it was Nicholas Biddle's version, a first-rate narrative digest, that revealed to the people the travels of Lewis and Clark; and Americans could begin to imagine the nation of the future, stretching three thousand miles from sea to sea.

D. W. BROGAN (*b. 1900*) is a Scotsman who has devoted most of his life to the study of America and the Americans. Professor of Political Science at Cambridge, he has made many trips to this country and once gave a series of lectures at Harvard. His interest is reflected in such titles as *The American Political System* (1933), *Abraham Lincoln* (1935), and *The American Character* (1944), from the last of which the following is taken. Anyone who is interested in a foreigner's explanation of our success in war should read "*The American Way in War*," which appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, May, 1944.

THE AMERICAN CHARACTER

IT WAS not surprising that the Americans, at the end of their long march from ocean to ocean, should have too hastily assumed that they "had America licked." But it was an error, all the same. The continent remained not so much hostile as capricious; the gorgeous West, pouring out wealth with lavish hand, often had more than a hand inside the glove. The settlers in the South and in the Mississippi Valley had had to deal with diseases that, to northern Europeans, were very hard to manage. There was yellow fever, coming in from the West Indies; there was pellagra; there was hookworm; there was malaria. Some of these diseases became manageable as modern medical technology developed; Gorgas and Manson and Pasteur and Ross not only made the Panama Canal a possibility—they also made an easier and safer life possible in the continental United States. Pellagra is curable mainly through a rise in economic standards, and—so far as that has come about—pellagra has been cured; although in the poverty-stricken and decaying regions of the South it is still a menace to white and black poor alike—and a disease that makes life disagreeable in Umbria has even less to make it tolerable in the derelict regions of Georgia. Malaria needs fighting by cleanliness, and this, too, involves economic factors, for it is far harder for the poor to be

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clean than for the rich. Hookworm is highly debilitating, but you are much less likely to get it if you wear shoes—and shoes cost money; there is nothing romantic about being a barefoot boy in the hookworm belt. Improved water supply, improved medical services, even the rudiments of organized sanitation were necessary to turn the depressed and despised “mudsills” of the South—once denounced for their quite sensible habit of eating “dirt” (i.e., earth) as a remedy for the deficiencies caused by hookworm—into healthy and energetic citizens. The work of the Rockefeller Foundation and of the state and federal governments did more for this southern problem than cubic miles of southern oratory—although some excellent oratory was devoted to getting the South to accept northern aid. And among the many things which the New Deal set out to do for the South (where so many New Deal votes were cast and some New Dealers even got elected) was to subsidize the building of privies. When the federal government went into the same business as Lemuel Putt of Sangamon County, that was news—and good news.

But the South was especially handicapped, climatically, historically, racially, economically. The problem of making the Middle West habitable was much easier; it required wealth and energy and scientific knowledge, which the region acquired in abundance. It also required a high degree of political efficiency, which was not so abundant. The Chicago drainage canal, though a reasonably adequate solution for Chicago, was less attractive to her downstream neighbors. But other breakdowns only prove that human institutions are human; a local collapse of sanitary efficiency is no more to be wondered at in Chicago than in Croydon.

Even the most favored regions had their drawbacks. The first settlers who moved into the Pacific slope were richly rewarded. Oregon, reasonably warm, well wooded, well watered, was more like Devon than like Illinois. And California, to the pioneers coming over the High Sierra or round the Horn, was a new Canaan. Indeed, as the first Americans began to visit the Californian coast, the great empty land with its scattered Mexican ranches was more like the world of Abraham than like the new machine world that already existed on the other side of the Atlantic. California cried out for more energetic settlers, and a swarm of Moses appeared to seize the land where, in its last spasm of imperial energy, Spain had created the little missions of San Francisco, Santa Barbara, San Luis Rey, San Luis Obispo, San Diego, and—destined to a highly paradoxical destiny—the village called after “Our Lady, Queen of the Angels.” California had many attractions, but one struck home in the Great Valley: it had no malaria; “the shakes” were unknown. But, as the unkind Frenchman said of New Zealand, “There are no snakes, but a great many Scotchmen,” and even California had its drawbacks. It had no weather, only the most perfect climate in the world, where season followed season in perfect regularity, with hardly an exceptional day. It seemed to be too good to be true. It was. The most regular feature of San Francisco weather was the summer fog, and in even more favored Southern California (as a saboteur from Florida put it in *The New Yorker*), “there is no rain, but the heavy dew sometimes washes away the railroad bridges.” All around Los

Angeles, the justification for this hit below the belt can be seen; empty river beds lined with concrete, provided with admirable bridges, recalling the Manzanares at Madrid. But the old joke to the effect that the Madrileños ought to sell the bridges and buy a river is pointless in the Californian outpost of New Spain, for when the rains do come, they come down with a speed and exuberance that are worthy of the Golden State; seven inches in two days makes very necessary indeed the bridges and parapets that control the *arroyos* turned torrents. Nor are floods the only trouble in California. The State has no equivalent of those terrible lightning storms of the Middle West, but it does have earthquakes. Significantly, it is still a little tactless to refer (in San Francisco) to "the earthquake of 1906"—you should say "the Fire," because that result of the natural catastrophe is less painful to recall. Fire is a manageable enemy of man and an old one, but when the foundations of the earth move, the most optimistic Californian is reminded of the untamable nature of the American land.

And at the other side of the continent, the rival paradise of Florida has had its bad shocks: in sudden frosts that kill the citrus crops; in devastating tornadoes that wreck the Miami waterfront as thoroughly as a second-class air raid could, or sweep the sea over such bold works of man as the road across the Atlantic to Key West.

In the other parts of America, the savage possibilities of the climate are never forgotten. All Ohio remembers the great flood year of 1913, whose impact on Columbus Mr. Thurber has made familiar to English readers. From that disaster came an elaborate and expensive system of flood control in Columbus, in Dayton, in all southwestern Ohio. But other river towns in other states have had their own and much more recent disasters. The Wabash does not, alas for the citizens of Indiana, always stay within its banks; and when we get to the Mississippi, we are faced with the greatest engineering problem in the western world. Only the great rivers of China have so bad a record. The floods starting when the ice and snow melt, fifteen hundred miles away from the subtropical delta, present a problem every year. And the news that is flashed down the river has the urgency of an air-raid alert, for ten feet of extra water at Paducah may mean disaster if something is not done *at once* at Vicksburg. So men and boys, white and black, are called out to pile cotton bales and sandbags on the threatened levees; women and children get ready to flee from the rising wall of water being funneled down the river. And somewhere the sides of the funnel give way and tens of thousands are made homeless, hundreds are drowned, and an economic catastrophe that would ruin a minor European state has to be coped with.

Even in the long-settled East, the water is still restive. The Connecticut River, normally as placid as the Thames at Teddington, sometimes goes on the rampage, reminding the inhabitants of cities like Hartford that life and property are still insecure. Great storms drive the sea over the summer cottages of Block Island. And there was an historical appropriateness in the comment Nature provided for the end of the tercentenary celebration at Harvard, for on the last day the great "storm wind of the equinox" that had been

rushing up the coast from Florida struck Cambridge (Massachusetts) with a force unknown to Cambridge (England). It showed that for the sons of the Puritans the God of their Fathers was still an angry God of storm and rain like Him who had smitten the army of Sisera and had later toughened the New Englanders.

Even when there are no catastrophes, there are constant climatic problems. The mere range of temperature is a problem. How do you plan your life in a place like Bismarck, North Dakota, where the July temperatures have ranged between 32° F. and 108° , and the January temperatures between 45° below zero and 60° above? What do you do, even in normally kindly New Orleans, where the January temperatures have ranged between 15° and 82° and the July temperatures between 35° and 102° ? In Wyoming at the source of the Colorado River, there is frost in every month of the year; over many states there is never any frost at all for decades at a time. *But* no part of the United States—not Texas, not Florida, not California—is free from frost that will, when by a freak it does come, kill lemons and oranges and avocados and break the hearts or strain the consciences of local boosters.

It seems likely that not until this century did the Americans really adjust themselves to the climate—as far as it is humanly possible to do so. Those who were of British origin were especially handicapped, coming as they did from an island where no one had been really comfortable in winter between the departure of the Romans and the coming of the more exigent type of American tourist. It is worth noting that one of the most important inventions of that most representative of Americans, Franklin, was an efficient stove (another was the lightning conductor). But to make houses even reasonably air-tight was a problem; the log cabin, whether or not it was of Finnish origin, was a solution better than any that English practice would suggest. The continuous series of farm buildings—house, stables, barn, all in line so that the farmer could pass from the kitchen to the horses and on to the cattle without going into the bitter air—was another necessary adjustment; moreover, it provided a fine range of buildings that could be turned into rumpus rooms, garages, etc., when city folk took over the New Hampshire countryside. With primitive central heating, the last lap was entered on. It is possibly no accident, again, that the most modern thermostatic systems of central heating owe their essential equipment to a firm in Minneapolis where the winter cold can kill ten times as often as it can on the milder Atlantic. An Iowa farm, painted in midwinter by Grant Wood, with its red barn and dominating silo is highly functional: devoted to the job of keeping men and stock alive and food and feed usable through the long siege of winter. No American farm-bred boy or girl is likely to think that he or she has America licked.

Nor, indeed, is the town boy, who, as he grows up, will have at least one memory of a great and killing cold spell, even if it does not become so legendary as the great New York freezes of 1837 and 1888. Gardeners will long remember the late winter of 1933-34 which killed so many plants and shrubs on Long Island; and all regions of America, except the South and the Pacific

Coast, have their own stories of death by cold, of stalled buggies or sleighs or even cars, of the dangers of bad chains or defective car-heaters, of a winter climate that always bears watching.

And summer demands it even more. For the early settlers were even less acclimated (as Americans put it) to heat than to cold. For one thing, as Professor S. E. Morison has pointed out, they wore far too many and too thick clothes. Even the Andalusians of Columbus' crews wore too many garments for a Caribbean summer. North Europeans did worse. There were economic obstacles, of course; until cotton textiles became cheap and abundant around 1800, linen was expensive and woollens uncomfortable. But there was more in it than that. Long after adequate textiles were abundant and cheap, fashion—not merely style but moral fashion—kept too many clothes on the American man and still more on the American woman. Men might wear "dusters" like Lincoln, or "seersuckers" like the prosperous middle class of the eighties. If they were prepared to be conspicuous, they might wear white linen suits like Mark Twain. But they still wore too much and, for dress occasions, they had to wear "Prince Alberts" (i.e., frock coats), tall hats, broadcloth, and starched collars and shirts. Theodore Roosevelt was regarded as pretty eccentric and reckless of the conventions, yet his typical costume was very formal and very uncomfortable indeed, compared with that of his niece's husband, the late President of the United States. It was still thought worthy of note when William Jennings Bryan took his coat off at Dayton, Tennessee, and defended Genesis in his shirt-sleeves—and that was not quite twenty years ago. And the uniform of the American army that went to France in 1917-18 included a stiff cloth collar that made the British officer's uniform the envy of his semi-strangled comrades in arms.

As for the women, to look at fashion magazines of 1900, to read in *Middletown* of the clothes worn in Indiana in the summer a generation ago, even to recall the fuss made about the length of bathing-suit skirts and other problems of sartorial morals twenty years ago, is to be as struck with astonishment as were the Greeks who learned from Herodotus that among the Lydians it was thought shameful even for men to be seen naked. No one, least of all a woman, need be overclothed in an American summer today. Indeed, unless she is clever with the needle or can afford custom-made clothes, any American woman who resolved to wear at least half as much as her mother used to would be baffled in any department store however big. The South Sea Islanders, put into "Mother Hubbards" by American missionaries and in consequence suffering discomfort, or even death, have been thoroughly avenged.

It is not only the American house that has at last been adapted to the American climate. American food has, too. Although Americans have always, by European standards, been abundantly fed, they have not until recently been well fed. One early difficulty of adjustment was that of diet; the average pioneer wanted the roast beef of old England or its equivalent, and was not to be put off with such new-fangled dishes as turkeys, tomatoes, corn, etc. He did adjust himself fairly quickly, but only in the sense of adding American

items to European, not of balancing his diet or making it suit the climate and the work he had to do.

Of course some classes and some regions have been badly fed for economic reasons. "Hog and hominy," the diet of the Confederate army, was bad, but any other diet would have been a novelty to Southern poor whites. Negroes were and often are badly fed from any point of view. But travelers and critical Americans alike long lamented the monotony of American food, the good food ruined in that enemy to the pursuit of happiness, the frying-pan; the saleratus bread which was debited with the American sallow complexion and the melancholy view of life characteristic of many Americans in middle age. Until modern storage methods came in, the severity of both winter and summer made variety in diet difficult. Ice, indeed, was an early American passion; in water, in coffee, in juleps and other alcoholic concoctions. But it was ice cut and stored in a New England winter and shipped to South Carolina—and India—in a highly speculative voyage. For if most of your cargo arrived safe, your fortune was made, while if your ship was becalmed, all you had was extra water ballast of no market value. One of the minor hardships of the Southern gentry in the War between the States was the shortage of ice, no laughing matter in the mint-julep country of tidewater Virginia.

With the coming of artificial ice, the worst was over and ice in summer became almost as necessary as coal in winter. European pioneers made refrigerator cars possible, to the profit of the meat-packers of Chicago and the fruit-growers of California and Florida. But American men still ate too much meat, ate it too often, and did not balance it with sufficient fruit and vegetables. It is only in modern times, very modern times, that the American diet has become varied, light, and suitable for the climate. The electric refrigerator is becoming a necessity; deep freezing promises new culinary resources, and air conditioning promises a new climate—indoors, at any rate. There is no visible prospect of any method of obviating the Turkish-bath sensation that hits the person who goes out from an air-conditioned train or store or movie house on a very hot day. It is still too early to relax. America has always managed to keep her children on their toes; she still manages to do so. But the day is not in sight on which science and business together will be able to guarantee the climate and natural resources of California to the whole Union—or even to California.

ANDRE MAUROIS (*b. 1885*) is as well known in England and America as in his native France. Admittedly a disciple of Lytton Strachey, he has written a number of popular biographies which make up in acuteness of perception and understanding of character for whatever they may lack in profundity. In his studies of Disraeli, Shelley, Byron, Dickens, Voltaire, Chateaubriand, and Marshal Lyautey, available in two languages, Maurois has helped to make the Anglo-Saxon and French civilizations mutually intelligible, and

this may ultimately be considered his most enduring contribution. The early chapters of his autobiography, I Remember, I Remember (1942), written at Mills College, in California, will help the reader to understand the environment which molds the French mind.

THE NEW AMERICA

BETWEEN 1900 and 1940 America had changed as rapidly as between 1860 and 1900. The cities continued to devour the countryside. Of the one hundred thirty-one million inhabitants in 1940, seventy-four million lived in cities. From 1905 to 1910, average annual immigration had been around a million a year. After 1929 it was reduced by law to a maximum of one hundred fifty thousand, each country having the right to a "quota" based on the proportion of its nationals in the population of the United States in 1920. In other words America undertook to stabilize the racial and linguistic composition of her population. Meanwhile the mixing of the diverse elements had been accelerated by the development of the means of transportation. In 1900 there had been four thousand automobiles in America; in 1941 there were thirty-two million. A great system of modern roads had been built. Air transport had outstripped the anticipations of H. G. Wells. From the first flights of the Wright brothers to the war of 1914, aviation had belonged to the domain of sport and of scientific research. Today the airways, marked out by aerial beacons, crisscross the country. Every large town has its airport. A network of invisible beams enables airplanes to find their way in the dark. The continent can be crossed in sixteen hours. To go from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia in 1812 required six days; in 1845, fourteen hours; in 1940, two hours. In 1941 four and one-half million passengers flew in the United States, the number of fatal accidents being only 2.2 per hundred million miles flown. In May, 1927, Charles Lindbergh startled the world by flying the Atlantic from New York to Paris. Today transoceanic clippers leave and return with the regularity of ocean liners. After this war, it is probable that aerial buses for Europe will be as numerous as Fifth Avenue buses.

The means of public information, like those of transportation, have unified the country. The station KDKA in Pittsburgh was the first to broadcast news when it transmitted press bulletins on the Harding-Cox election. Then the Columbia Broadcasting Company, the National Broadcasting Company, and numerous independent stations were born. In the United States today radio has as much influence on public opinion as the newspapers. At every hour of the day and night news bulletins are broadcast and commentators, some calmly, others excitedly, explain to the masses what they should think of them. The government makes use of the radio systems to communicate with its citi-

"The New America," from *The Miracle of America* by André Maurois. Published by Harper & Brothers.

zens on important occasions. President Franklin D. Roosevelt owed his great popularity in part to the simplicity and clarity of his speeches, which were heard at their firesides by millions of families. Although certain newspapers (such as the *New York Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor*) are read by the élite throughout the country, the press as a whole remains local. There are newspaper chains that belong to groups (Scripps-Howard press, Hearst press) whose members all publish the same articles on the same day. The columnist is the newspaper equivalent of the radio commentator. He does not express an editorial policy but his own personal views. A number of magazines are distributed in all the forty-eight states. *Harper's* and the *Atlantic Monthly* play the role that belong in France to the *Revue de Paris* and the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. The *Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's*, the *Reader's Digest* and *Liberty* have attained circulations of several million. The *New Yorker* and the group of magazines belonging to Henry Robinson Luce (*Life*, *Time*, *Fortune*), more satiric and sometimes cynical in tone, reveal by the extent of their popularity a new attitude and a reaction against the Age of the Chromo on the part of many American minds. The leftist weeklies, the *Nation* and the *New Republic*, exert a fairly extensive influence because they are read by men who shape public opinion.

The development of cities and of means of transportation has disturbed family life. In the big cities the high rents have reduced family apartments to a size that makes communal life uncomfortable. The increasing difficulty of finding household servants contributes to this problem; consequently, with the aid of the automobile and the growing number of hotels, many Americans have become accustomed to living away from home. The midday meal is eaten by everyone near his place of business, in either a restaurant or a cafeteria. Children are at school a good part of the day. In the evening young men and women frequently go out in couples with friends of their own age. The liberty permitted them would have scandalized their ancestors. It is due to the weakening of the sexual tabus, to birth control, to the diffusion of a pseudo-Freudianism, and to the influences of elements other than Anglo-Saxon. The movies offer a sanctuary to all these wandering couples. It was about 1903 that the first "plot movie" was shown as public entertainment; in 1913 the first serial stories appeared on the screen (*The Mysteries of New York*); in 1926 sound films were introduced. In 1940 eighty million spectators a week thronged the moving-picture theaters. The American moving pictures, with the aid of excellent actors, have conquered the world. On America they have imposed their optimistic and naïve view of life. Nevertheless, during the last few years a touch of bitterness and of realism has found its way into certain stories: *Grapes of Wrath*, *The Little Foxes*, *The Philadelphia Story*. In 1940 adultery was still practically banned from the screen, but it does not play the same role in America that it does in Europe as a mitigator of monogamy, which in this country is rendered bearable by successive marriages. Certain states, especially Nevada (Reno), have turned divorce into a profitable industry. The number of divorces per hundred thousand inhabitants doubled between 1914 and 1940

—rising from one hundred to two hundred. (Two hundred sixty-four thousand divorces and fifteen hundred sixty-five thousand marriages in 1940.)

Mass production, which has become the dominant characteristic of American industry, has had two major effects: reduction of the cost of living and uniformity in the way of living. The standard of living of the average American is in many respects superior to that of the European and it is tending to rise. Thanks to government control of foodstuffs, the poorest can buy as pure produce as the richest; the American cuisine, after long neglect, has made remarkable progress, and household work has been rendered easier by ingenious machines (refrigerators, automatic washing machines, devices for fast cooking, dishwashing machines, etc.). Ready-made clothes are well cut, and custom tailors have become rare. Automobiles, radios, bathrooms are available to a large portion of the population and, before the war, could be purchased on the installment plan. The weak point of American social life is housing. Many poor quarters should be torn down and replaced. One solution is to build auxiliary communities near enough to the big cities to permit daily commutation. If America succeeds in completely eliminating slums and unemployment, which seems by no means impossible, she will have created for her citizens national conditions of life superior to any that have been known by mankind up to this time. The other side of the picture is the excessive uniformity encouraged by mass production abetted by incessant advertising. In any given month millions of Americans drink the same beverage (in 1940 Coca-Cola), read the same books (Book-of-the-Month Club), see the same films, eat the same cereals, tell the same jokes, take the same medicines, and then, with amazing unanimity, pass on to next month's craze.

The status of the Negro remains a distressing problem. It presents two different aspects, depending on whether one views it in the North or in the South. At the time of the war in 1917 a very considerable black migration from the South to the North took place. It was caused by the necessity of replacing the soldiers in the factories and by the attraction exerted on colored people by those states that recognize their civil rights. In 1940 there were some two and a half million Negroes in the North, almost ten million in the South, and around one hundred and seventy thousand in the West. Those in the North could vote freely, which gave them a certain influence on local government and enabled them to obtain hospitals and schools, which are still inadequate but nevertheless mark a real advance. Colored lawyers and doctors practice their profession only among their own people. The two populations, white and black, for the most part live in separate districts. In the South the great majority of Negroes are not allowed to vote. They are debarred from the polls under various pretexts. Equality before the law, in the eyes of the Negro, can be nothing but a white man's myth. Nevertheless the American Negro has made great intellectual progress. Negro universities (for example, Spellman University in Atlanta) produce cultured men and women. Negro literature, music, and painting are of high quality. . . .

Religious life is less fervent than it was in the nineteenth century. About 50 per cent of Americans are not members of any church; however, this figure

does not represent the private sentiments of the country. America remains essentially Christian, but by this must be understood emotional reactions rather than doctrinal beliefs. The average American still feels the necessity of justifying his actions on ethical grounds. "Unethical" is a word that immediately rules out any proposal or transaction. Religious life and political life are closely associated. Subjects for sermons are borrowed from internal or foreign political controversies; they are announced in the newspapers among the paid advertisements. Famous clergymen are consulted on national problems just as are the presidents of universities. Nevertheless their influence is only effective within narrow limits. Prohibition was a failure and the Protestant churches do not dare attack birth control. Quite different is the attitude of the Catholic Church, which maintains its traditional disciplines and imposes rigid rules of conduct upon its members. Birth control is still prohibited, divorce is not recognized, annulments are rare. In the United States the Catholic Church numbers around twenty-two million members, almost all from Europe: Irish, German, Polish, Italian, and a small number of French. It possesses its own schools and universities, but it retains the characteristics and the attitude of a minority. To be a Catholic hitherto has been an insurmountable obstacle for any candidate for the presidency. American Jews have reached the number of almost five million. Many of them have a tendency to depart from rigid orthodoxy; reformed Jewish churches, with services in English, are numerous. Conferences of Jews and Christians make it their purpose to preach and to practice tolerance. This is a necessary undertaking for, from time to time, waves of intolerance can be seen gathering in the United States (renaissance of the Ku Klux Klan, against the Negroes and the Jews; the anti-Semitic campaign of Father Coughlin).

Education is one of the most formidable problems of the America of tomorrow. No country takes education more seriously: There are about twenty million boys and girls in the elementary schools, five million in the high schools, almost a million and a half in the colleges and universities. Everywhere the traveler can admire the fine campuses with their modern or neo-Gothic buildings, the gay crowds of college men and girls, the playing fields, the laboratories, and, in larger towns, schools that are palatial. But the intellectual results seem less brilliant than those obtained in the eighteenth century in the little red schools of New England. During this war conscription has shown that illiteracy in certain regions is dangerously high. College presidents, such as Robert Maynard Hutchins of Chicago, complain of the mediocre training of the students sent to them by the high schools. What are the reasons for this situation which, to a European, would seem to indicate relative failure? In part, the complete lack of unity in teaching programs. Every European child receives willy-nilly the same fundamentals of education. In the United States, the standards vary with the different states. Higher education is sometimes excellent but it cannot build a solid culture in minds that are without foundations. Certain poor states economize on their teaching staffs, and in such states teachers and professors are badly paid. They do not have the social position that should be theirs. Institutions of no intellectual worth

have the right to bestow diplomas, licenses, and doctorates. The money of the rich universities is often spent for buildings rather than for chairs. Instructors (with some very honorable exceptions) make no attempt to mold critical minds; many of them demand a knowledge of facts rather than of methods and forget that "information is not culture." On the other hand American colleges are more successful than European ones in teaching the art of communal life. The universities produce good citizens; and they leave almost all their graduates, both men and women, with a memory of four enchanted years.

During the period from 1900 to 1940, American literature detached itself from English literature. The language, constantly renewed by brilliant inventions and figures of speech, recalls the fluidity of sixteenth-century English. The tone and the subjects became thoroughly American. Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, and later Hemingway, Steinbeck, Faulkner, and Caldwell have painted American life with a realism and a harshness that are reminiscent of French naturalism. They represent a reaction against complacent optimism, against puritanism, and against sentimentalism. In *Main Street* and in *Babbitt*, Sinclair Lewis has drawn a cruel picture of the small towns of the Middle West. Is this indictment of the American middle classes fair? Vernon Parrington replies that Sinclair Lewis and the other novelists of the school of disillusion fail to see what is the essence of Americanism and what redeems its faults:

A rich and abundant life, motivated by a fine sense of ethical responsibility and disciplined by a democratic public school, is, in sober fact, the distinguishing characteristic of America that sets our country apart from all other lands in western civilization. . . . Where else has the industrial revolution been brought so completely and happily under dominion to the democratic ideal, or been so ennobled by ethical values? Here it has scattered its wealth among the plain people with a bountiful hand, until the poorest family enjoys its nickel-plated plumbing, its flivver, its telephone, its radio, its movies, its funnies, and all the thousand aids to comfort and intelligence which a few generations ago were denied kings.

It is a fact that the industrial revolution in America enriched the nation: public libraries, museums, free hospitals and clinics, universities open to all. All these fine institutions of a rich and generous community go to make up a society worthy of men's love, capable of improvement, and able to inspire in its members a devotion whose strength the present war has shown. The American is not a nationalist in the European sense of the word; he cannot be, since for many citizens of the United States language, customs, and traditions are different from those of their neighbors. But Americans, even those of recent date, are united in their love for a certain kind of life which is theirs and which they are ready to defend.

One can measure some of the changes that have taken place in American society during the present century by rereading a book which won a merited success in 1899: Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Veblen's thesis was that human beings, once they have raised themselves above the average and, with surplus wealth, have acquired the right to leisure, do not so much try to be happy as to make a parade of their possessions and emphasize

their superiority to the rest of mankind. This is the reason, said Veblen, for codes of conduct, of dress, of language and manners whose sole value is that they are impossible for the laborer to follow. The high silk hat, patent-leather shoes, etiquette, contempt for manual work, knowledge of art and grammar are just so many diverse forms of the need to prove that one belongs to the leisure class for which the only honorable occupations are hunting, war, and government. This thesis may have been true in 1900 when businessmen, once they had made a fortune, and more still their descendants, tried to acquire the tastes of the ancient leisure classes. It has completely ceased to be true in 1943. The granddaughter of the millionaire of 1900 works in a factory and is proud of it. She laughs at the tabus of dress, manners, and language of the former governing classes. What has happened? Since war has become principally industrial, work shares in the prestige that formerly belonged to the warrior alone. The workshop now is seen as an extension of the army. The army itself is nothing but an immense workshop that sends out machines, services them, and repairs them. The officer as well as the soldier must be a resourceful mechanic. This has produced real equality.

2. *Education*

WILLIAM A. PERCY (1885-1942) *grew up on a Mississippi plantation, attended the University of the South, and spent most of his life in Greenville as a lawyer. Interspersed was an assignment as a relief commissioner in Belgium during the first World War, followed by active service as a captain of infantry. He is the author of three volumes of poetry, as well as the autobiographical* *Lanterns on the Levee*, *from which the following is taken.*

LEARNING FROM TEACHERS

THE TIME came when Mother and Father had to decide on what might be termed my formal education. So far the only efforts of that sort had been Aunt Nana's piano lessons and Mère's instruction in French pronunciation. Neither was too successful. I developed a nice touch, a moderate ability to read notes, and a hatred for Aunt Nana because she would not permit me to step on the loud pedal during scales. But I was a lazy and ungifted

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musician. My French accent got me to Belgium and France during the war, and delighted no one after I arrived. Heaven help parents worrying over what to do with children a little out of the ordinary! It's a dark problem even with the recent assistance of Doctors Freud and Jung; when Mother and Father faced it they had to decide by ear. I was a sickly youngster who never had illnesses, who hated sports partly because they didn't seem important and mostly because I was poor at them, who knew better what I didn't want than what I did, who was sensitive but hard-headed, docile but given to the balks, day-dreamy but uncommunicative, friendly but not intimate—a frail problem-child, a pain in the neck. To make matters harder, the choice of what to do with me was restricted. I was too young to be sent to boarding school even if Father could have afforded it, there were no local private schools, and Mother had a wise intuition that, though I needed the rough and tumble of a public school, I didn't need as much as I'd get. In desperation they chose the local Roman Catholic convent for little boys and girls run by the Sisters of Mercy and started me off one September morning with a basket of lunch and no advice.

The first thing I learned there was the existence of evil. All the boys were herded together in the same classroom, presided over by Sister Evangelist, a midget of a nun with the valor and will-power of an Amazon, who taught every class, held prayers, occasionally larruped the wayward with the thin cane pointer she always carried, bullied, cajoled, and beguiled us unflaggingly and devotedly. But there was one boy she was afraid of, though I have seen her whirl into him dauntlessly and whip him until he whined. The oldest and biggest boy in the school, he was a monster of evil—cruel, nasty, bullying—with face and body so like Mansfield's Richard III that they published his qualities. All of us knew what he was and feared him. I once saw a rattlesnake in a bare spot of the woods coiled and rattling. That dry incessant hypnotic sound hushed the little sounds of the forest—bird-song, beetle-drone, wing-whir—the little things stood still and held their breath; you could hear the terrified silence. It was that way when this boy standing behind Sister faced us with some obscene pantomime: we were hypnotized with horror and helpless. A sickening lesson but a necessary one for those of us with third-rate bodies who insist on living uncowed in a world of evil. How cope with concrete active evil when your body is weak and the fear in your throat is like cold bile? How breathe the same air with the vicious who are strong? How fashion weapons against such a one and what shall the weapons be? If the gods are good, try charm; if not, try guile; both failing, try flight. Survival virtues, you know. Once there was another defense in vogue—every youth was taught the use of sword or firearms. In the South it was the pistol, as deadly in the hands of the little fellow as of the giant—and the little fellow made the poorer target. Many contend that if you fight with your fists well and honorably and are whipped, your self-respect is saved. Not mine. You meet a brute and a bully—what consolation is there in trying to knock his lights out and having your own dimmed in the effort? But with a pistol, ah! There are too many villains abroad, the well-disposed need breathing-space

anyhow. Well, none of us little boys had pistols and our tormentor still lives, a wake of wickedness behind, a long life ahead. Left on his own, death has a poor sense of selection. Anyway, that boy started me thinking about defense weapons and I've thought a lot about them ever since.

Determination ranked high among Sister's virtues, and among other things she determined that mine was a likely soul and she was going to save it. I gave up; there was no use resisting; into her hands I committed my spirit. She would have succeeded in her determination had not I incautiously remarked one day to Mother, who was bending over an ailing Cape jessamine at the moment, that I had decided to become a priest. I had anticipated dismay but not indignation. Mother rose from the flower-bed to her full height, the height, say, of Lady Macbeth or Clytemnestra; top late under the solemn fillet I saw the scorn. But her only observation was that there was no excuse for talking like a fool at my age. I must have been an unbearable little prig. I do hope I've outgrown it. If not, it wasn't Mother's fault. I shouldn't blame Sister Evangelist for my unbridled mystic fervor at this time; evidently my ground was plowed and harrowed waiting for her sowing. I became intolerably religious, going to early mass at the slightest provocation, racking my brain to find something to confess once a month, praying inordinately, and fasting on the sly. It was infinitely trying to the family and so unexpected, so unlike anything in the case-history of any recorded member of the clan, French, English, or Scotch. I just couldn't help it, it was a violent attack, perhaps I've never fully recovered. Indeed, painful as it all was to the family, it was anguish and ecstasy, but mostly anguish, to me. I wanted so intensely to believe, to believe in God and miracles and the sacraments and the Church and everything. Also, I wanted to be completely and utterly a saint; heaven and hell didn't matter, but perfection did. Yet never, never for a moment, was my belief without doubt: the Satan of my disbelief was at my elbow scoffing, insinuating, arguing, day and night. I'm certain Shelley never sank upon the thorns of life and bled nearly so often as I did between ten and sixteen. To be at once intellectually honest and religious is a rack on which many have perished and on which I writhed dumbly, for I knew even then there were certain things which, like overwhelming physical pain, you must fight out alone, at the bottom of your own dark well, beyond ministration of assuagement or word of advice, incommunicado and leper-lonely. If you die it is natural; if you live you have learned pity and the strength of silence.

I didn't die, and, curiously enough, neither did Sister Evangelist. Only last year I saw her, and she must be approximately a hundred. Sister Scholastica, my old music teacher and the only teacher I ever feared because she was absolutely impervious to my charm, telephoned me and announced that I was a godless, ungrateful, heartless monster (she always telephoned that way, never giving her name and knowing I would recognize her voice and style), that Sister Evangelist was on her deathbed in Vicksburg, that she loved me more than any of her thousand pupils, that in my baseness I ignored her and would not even take the trouble to visit her, dying, in fact barely this side of rigor mortis. As usual I took Sister Scholastica's hint and dashed to Vicksburg. At

the convent door a scared rabbit of a little nun asked my name and mission, suspiciously admitted me to the cool bare sitting-room, and left me there. There was a long pause during which I assumed they were propping up Sister Evangelist so that she could reach out feebly and blindly to give me her last blessing. It was pretty staggering, therefore, when Sister Evangelist came tripping in, unbent by her hundred years and vivacious as a cricket. She immediately loosed a diatribe of piety and invective, contrasting the promise of my past with the worm-eaten fruit of my present, and all with no more pause, punctuation, or capitalization than the last forty-six pages of *Ulysses*. At the first drop of a comma I got a word in edgewise: "Heavens, Sister! You talk as if God didn't have any sense of humor." She burst into gales of laughter, exclaiming: "Everybody forgets it; even I do sometimes," and the next two hours were chuckling gossip, singularly naïve and gay. The incident helps me to understand better why St. Francis would drop over to visit Santa Clara when he was tired, and to appreciate Fra Angelico's versions of walking all over God's heaven. Those two old ladies with Machiavellian heroism and saintly mendacity had made one last try at saving my soul. Bless them, I wish they had succeeded!

So probably Mother was right when after two or three years she concluded the convent had done me all possible good but held possibilities of harm. After grievous cogitation she and Father chose as my next teacher Judge Griffin, who lived across the street and had never taught school. To church-goers he was the town atheist, which is only one more proof that the churches wouldn't recognize religion if they met it in the middle of the big road, for he was a saint. His house, where I went for lessons, was a turmoil of grandchildren, dogs, models of inventions, bundles of cotton lint, sacks of cottonseed (he was a great hybridizer), silkworms eating mulberry leaves and spinning cocoons, books on tables, on chairs, in stacks on the floor, and old furniture too big for its quarters, knee to knee everywhere—plus a raccoon. Judge Griffin's father had been the largest cottonland-owner in the world, before the war and the river destroyed his holdings, and he himself had studied at universities east and abroad and had gained knowledge of every world but this one, and much wisdom. Others had become rich from the gadgets he had invented for cotton gins and roller-skates while he became poorer and retired farther from community life into his own family and his own thoughts. With his silver hair and beautiful benign face I had long recognized him as a friend and was enchanted at the prospect of hobnobbing with him as a teacher. I anticipated golden hours and was not disappointed. We browsed and ranged and broke every law of pedagogy. He read me *Paradise Lost* and Cary's translation of the *Divine Comedy* and I perceived grandeur and nobility and heroic struggle, even when I didn't understand. We pondered and discussed the Doré illustrations, which I am told are pretty bad, but which we considered magnificent. He even told me a little about the epic he was writing, *Ruin Robed*, in which Napoleon replaced Lucifer; but I could never induce him to read it to me. And Shakespeare—but there a distressing memory intrudes. We were reading *Othello*—I must have been about ten—and it came over me horribly and deli-

ciously during the first act that Iago's conversation was unadulterated smut. I certainly didn't understand it, but I sensed it, I knew in my soul it was pornography and I enjoyed it exquisitely. ("Je tremble délicieusement," sang Louise.) It was shortlived bliss; torture followed. Conscience pointed out unanswerably not only that my spasm of enjoyment was in itself sinful but that to continue reading such immorality would be willful and therefore mortal sin; furthermore that the excuse I offered of being only a pupil with no control over my teacher's assignment was false, insincere, and cowardly. Torn between what I knew to be my duty and a terrified shyness at mentioning such a thing, especially to my old mentor and friend, I presented myself to the Judge next morning resolute, dry-tongued, and sick through every inch of me. When he picked up his beloved volume of Shakespeare I said thickly but audibly: "I don't think we ought to read any more *Othello*. It's—it's immoral." My venerable master was speechless. He gazed uncertainly and a little mournfully at his chela. At length he said: "Iago does do some ugly talking. Maybe we'd better try *The Merchant of Venice*." It was one of the two occasions in my life when I showed courage, and in such a poor cause. As usual the reward was incommensurate: *The Merchant of Venice* seemed tame, and still does.

Of Judge's pedagogy I recall little and that not to his credit. Struggling with my handwriting, he suggested that the best-looking hands were those in which the tall letters and the short letters approximated each other in height. I should like to think that advice was the corrupting influence which, exfoliating in my subconscious, has rendered my script unintelligible to anyone, including myself, but I doubt it. As with all great teachers, his curriculum was an insignificant part of what he communicated. From him you didn't learn a subject, but life. I suspect anyway that the important things we learn we never remember because they become part of us, we absorb them. We don't absorb the multiplication tables (at least not the seventh and eleventh), but those things that are vitamins and calories to the spirit, the spirit seizes on and transmutes into its own strength, wholly and forgetfully. Tolerance and justice, fearlessness and pride, reverence and pity, are learned in a course on long division if the teacher has those qualities, as Judge Griffin had.

What with learning the eternal verities from my old friend and talking poetry instead of doing sums, Mother judged I was growing a trifle remote from ordinary doings. French, practical, opposed to excess even of virtue, she concluded a further change was needed in my scholastic career. So I was transferred to Father Koestenbrock, the parish priest, for mornings of French and Latin, and to Mr. Bass, superintendent of city schools, for afternoons of whatever else immature minds require.

Mr. Bass was red-haired except that he was bald, and he had the sort of pale eyes and vague pinkish features red-heads grow when they decide not to be beautiful. Almost everybody recognizes the temperament common to red-heads—irascibility, generosity, nervous energy, mental quickness, with just a touch of flightiness: Mr. Bass didn't miss a one. I wonder why when the obvious connection between the innards and out'ards of red-heads is generally conceded, it is doubted in people of slant eyes and yellow skins and flatly de-

nied in people of kinky hair and black skins. Someone's always drawing the color line; now they won't let the Negro's interior be as individual as his exterior. I am told there is no relation between what you see of him and what there is of him: the only difference is a sort of hallucination in the eye of the beholder, he's a white man inside. Very like, very like. Mr. Bass, though, was different: his insides matched up perfectly with his outsides. He'd come storming into the classroom with a cocoon when I'd prepared with boundless boredom the lesson on Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*, and the hour would trip by gaily while he explained that the cocoon's poor inmate never got to be a person but was always a transition. Always a becoming, never a being—a sort of Bergson bug. One day he brought in a lunar moth, a fabulous thing of silver-white wings, lyre-shaped, with a breath of apple green over them and frugal markings of rose. Milton for all his headachy classical allusions was abandoned, though the ghost-creature was obviously just blown from the bosom of Demeter's lost daughter. Milton studied and Milton read were quite different, I found. Judge Griffin's was the only method. Poetry should never be taught.

Although a school-teacher from his youth, Mr. Bass, I believe, hated teaching and learning by textbook. He would sit on the edge of his chair as though about to leap up, and flop his knees together very fast as if a grasshopper's sound-box ought to be between them, and you knew he wanted to dart off somewhere and you knew going with him would be much more interesting than staying anywhere. Further, you had a definite hunch where he longed to be going—to his garden. It was the worst-looking garden I ever saw, with no design, no order, really no sense, a hodge-podge of flowers and vegetables. But everything grew there and thrived and bloomed as it did nowhere else. He had no preferences: a carrot was as dear as a peony, a black-eyed Susan as a rose; it only mattered that they were living things mysteriously standing in the earth and reaching for the sun. The mystery was everything to him. I never knew a heart so capable of wonder, though of an earthy unmaudlin sort. When soaked with sweat and dabbed with dirt from digging, his ugliness rather resembled Pan's—not the maligned Pan of the nymphs, but that gaunt mysterious god of flocks and herds, of crops and weathers that rustics worshipped. The rustic Pan in him made his garden for use, not looks. Any morning, if you were an early riser, you could catch a glimpse of him hatless, dirty, untidy, a basket bulging with green things under his arm, and on the run. He dropped into people's front yards unbeknownst and planted unpredictable things—iris and tulips of course, but just as likely salvia against a brick wall. Even more secretive were his vegetable errands. Before anyone was out or up, he'd leave heaps of them—tomatoes, corn, okra, and the like—on the back steps of his friends or preferably of the unknown and sensitive poor. Many a family he half supported whose name he never knew.

All of this by some unaccountable transmutation got itself into his teaching. The way he scuttled in and out of the classroom caused a draught, and if you'd seen grass growing from his ears you wouldn't have noticed. Yet he had principles and ideas galore and never hesitated to express them, no matter

how hostile the audience. His vehemence was infectious and you knew he was right when you knew he was wrong.

One summer he took me out West—my first real trip. He was an ideal traveling companion. He had the gift of being informal without being intimate, and his eyes and ears were born anew every half hour. We drove in a stagecoach behind ten span of horses from Flagstaff to the Grand Canyon and I almost died happy at the sight of it. It is God's most personal creation; you feel He's just walked off and is expected back any minute. But of course Mr. Bass in his heart of hearts preferred the flower fields and enormous forests of California.

He wasn't Mississippi-born. To be accurate, he was earth-born but he hailed from a farm in Missouri—a farm, not a plantation. His people farmed not to make money but to live well, and they succeeded, not only in that respect but in developing character, individuality, and easy-going self-respect. Many such are scattered over all the states of the South and they constitute its greatest hope. They were here before the Civil War, they will be here when wars have ceased. They, the aristocrats, and the Negroes are the only three classes in the South of which God must be proud. Mr. Bass was plain through and through and rich and unadulterated. Wherever he is sleeping he is thinking how good the earth is and wondering what flowers are just overhead.

Father Koestenbrock and I were rather cronies anyway, he having heard every confession I'd ever made, having given me my first communion and prepared me for confirmation, and, not least, having talked to me about his plans for the new church. He was not a saint and nothing shocked him. I used to peep at him through the confessional grille and he seemed half asleep, only he couldn't have been because he was too big and fat for his side of the confessional and it must have been uncomfortable. He never was interested in my sins and I believe if I had whispered: "I killed Aunt Nana with the butcher knife because she wouldn't let me hold down the loud pedal!" he would have replied: "Say ten decades of your beads, go in peace, and sin no more." Maybe it all came from his being Dutch, a Dutch nobleman. When he said in a special tone "my native city of Haarlem," you smelled great quantities of rich food and the bouquet of four different wines and saw fat strong women in layers of petticoats prodding among piles of red cheeses.

Naturally, he smoked a huge meerschaum pipe which it had taken him twenty years to color a dull Rembrandt gold and which rested on the first pleat of his stomach when he settled back in his chair and said unromantically: "Give the present tense of *amo*." If you didn't, believe me, the very furniture rocked until it looked to be drawn by Van Gogh, and like a car of Juggernaut he lumbered over you and you stayed flattened out until he relented. The thing to do during such a cataclysm was to figure ways of diverting the conversation to Haydn—not always easy. That quieted him and presently he'd be laughing like a Frans Hals, exclaiming: "Ach! Haydn! He knew more than all the rest. Chopin—sick! Beethoven—too religious! Mozart—too elegant! But Haydn—that is music, happy and sober, sane as sunshine!"

With any kind of tact and luck he could then be led to analyze Rubens's

Descent from the Cross and Raphael's *Christ and Saint Veronica*, engravings of which "from the old country" hung on the walls of his study, or to discourse on Dutch Gothic, the style of architecture he'd chosen for the church he was determined to build. I don't understand how his love of Haydn taught him to sing high mass, but something did, and more understandingly and movingly and musically than ever I heard it sung. The magical melodic line of his Pater Noster with its earnestness and pleading could keep you holy for a week.

But ordinarily in religious matters he was earth-treading like Mère: he was not one to receive the stigmata. Once I thought he failed to see a delicate spiritual point with almost willful obtuseness. I had gone to confession in the afternoon preparatory to Holy Communion at early mass next morning. That night I felt so sanctified that at some mundane intrusion I lost my temper and answered back with more than asperity. It was a bad night I passed, thinking over my sin and debating how I could take communion with it unshriven. Mass had started when I entered the church, so there was no chance for a word with Father beforehand. He knew every member of his little flock and had clearly in mind those who were to take communion that morning. The moment arrived, he stood with the host facing the congregation, and the communicants, in-drawn and bowed, walked up the aisle to the communion rail. I stayed where I was, miserably. Then the unforeseen, the impossible happened. When he had given the host to the last communicant, he looked over the church as if searching for someone, saw me, and, standing before the high altar, in full view of the congregation, motioned me to come to the rail. I went up the aisle alone and conspicuous, knelt at the rail alone and conspicuous, and when he bent over me with the host, whispered: "I can't take communion," turned and walked back to my seat. It took every ounce of courage in my whole being. After mass Father called me to the sacristy and demanded an explanation. I explained. He looked as if he wanted to box my ears and blurted out: "Ach! Don't act like a fool. Kneel. Say an act of contrition," and placed the wafer between my lips. His manner worried me, but it never crossed my mind I wasn't right. It never does.

Père said Father Koestenbrock's French accent was painfully Dutch, which infuriated me as it smacked of disloyalty, though doubtless his French was no better than his English, and I knew it. By temperament I'm afraid I'm partisan and attain impartiality, if ever, only by an effort of will. However Dutch Father's French *r's* and *n's*, his enthusiasm for certain phases of French literature would have done credit to a French curé. He adored Bossuet and Fénelon, and when he started reading aloud the *Oraisons funèbres* or *Télémaque* with spacious eloquence, there was no telling when he'd desist. I would be bowed with boredom, for they seemed to me in spite of the rolling periods about as unctuous and self-satisfied as *Sandford and Merton* (one of Mur's less inspired selections).

Every six months or so I would come for lessons and find him sitting in his bedroom instead of the study, without pipe or glasses, and in his undershirt. He would look at me dully and from a distance and say thickly: "Go away."

At home Mother would explain Father was sick again, but she would be visibly upset and a little angry. He would be sick for several weeks. At first I didn't understand, but after a while it came to me one way or another that my teacher was on a drunk. Drunkenness was bad and Father wasn't bad—my first lesson in reconciling the irreconcilable. The immature must be ruthless and intolerant while their own uncertain inner principles and ideals are hardening into the patterns within which they must enact their own future dramas. We must demand of them much, but not tolerance. Father did nothing improper or public, he just stayed drunk in his room, alone, for weeks and weeks. I would have hated another priest for doing the same thing, it would have been immoral and disgraceful. But Father was not immoral, he was good. Suddenly I experienced the beginning of wisdom. Father was lonely, he never would be or could be anything else. Realizing that hurt me a lot. But I thought Father was single and unique in his loneliness: it was only the beginning of wisdom.

As he grew older and tired, he became impatient about his new church. He ordered the plans, and for a year or more studied and changed and caressed them. His congregation being poor and he a most shy collector of pew-rent, the building fund remained stationary. He talked of visiting his native city of Haarlem, but always found some excuse for not going. At last to everyone's astonishment he announced that the contract for the building of the church had been let. How could it be paid for? The congregation was in a flurry. But he was gay as Papa Haydn and busy, busy from morning to night. The contractor he selected was an elderly German, a proud fine craftsman, with a fiendish temper and an unquenchable thirst. Then began two years of heroic battle: the two old gentlemen fought all over the place, about every item and detail, they throve and batted on the conflict, you could hear them high up in the scaffolding in outbursts of bilingual denunciation that would have done credit to Michelangelo and the Pope. At last the building was completed, the yellow brick walls, the Gothic windows and arches, the rather stumpy steeple of gray slate—a little Dutch Gothic church, well built, homey, in good taste. And the congregation began to inquire about the mortgage. There would be no mortgage. Father had paid for it all himself. His patrimony, hoarded by a prudent Dutch father to protect the old age of his son, had gone into his church, every nickel of it, and he was happy and old and penniless.

The loneliness came back on him, stronger than ever, and there was nothing much to live for. He was an old man and very tired. So he gave up his parish and retired to a home for superannuated priests on the coast, leaving his little church and us. He'd done his best with both. He returned once years afterwards during our Ku Klux fight, and he was glad to be home. He and I talked about things for hours. At last I said:

"This is the only time within a year that two people have talked in this county for as long as we have without mentioning the Ku Klux Klan. What do you think of the Klan, Father?"

"I do not think of it," he replied. "The Church has been here a long time; it will be here a much longer time, after all these klans and foolish things are

forgotten. And it is good for the Church. You remember Luther. The Church was rotten in his day, it needed to be attacked. Old Luther made the Church cleanse herself. So now. The Knights of Columbus, worthy souls, became filled with their own importance during the war and did a great deal of foolish bragging. The Klan will bring them to their senses. It is a very good thing for the Church." He rose to go. We knew we should never see each other again. He looked at me, but his voice was matter-of-fact:

"You always had a spiritual nature. As a little boy you were almost a saint. I—I never had a spiritual nature. I only tried my best." I was never so shamed.

Judge Griffin, Mr. Bass, Father Koestenbrock—their names are being forgotten in our little town, the town where they lived. They have gone the way we all take and they left no mark on the world. But before I join them, I bear testimony they left shining marks on one little boy's heart that shine still.

ROGER W. HOLMES *No one could accuse Dr. Holmes, Professor of Philosophy at Mt. Holyoke College, of inhabiting the "ivory tower," reputed sanctuary of scholars. In this unorthodox approach to such scholastic impedimenta as examinations and grades, the author has something of value to say to both teacher and student. The editors suspect that many a teacher wishes he had the courage to be as outspoken.*

WHAT EVERY FRESHMAN SHOULD KNOW

I NEVER face a class without wondering what would happen if students were not so docile. Why do you meet your professors and the academic taradiddle of college with such fear and respect? You are everywhere in chains because you accept a tradition about college work which at cost to you misrepresents its values and overestimates its importance. You remind me of the elephant chained to his stake at the circus. If the poor devil knew his own strength! And if you and your classmates but knew *yours*! The good things that might happen to our colleges if you would take matters into your own hands and pull up a few of the rotted stakes of academic tradition are worth dreaming about. Consider some confidential advice from one who would like to see you gain your freedom, who knows the weaknesses of academic life from the inside, and can give a few pointers on how to pull at those stakes.

One of the first things you are told is that you must study hard. But that is only half of the story. The other half is that beyond a certain point which is easily reached, the more you work the poorer the results. In my particular college you would be supposed to devote not more than fifteen hours a week

"What Every Freshman Should Know," from *The American Mercury*, November, 1940. Reprinted by permission.

to classes and another thirty to outside assignments. That means that you should be able to escape academic duties for one whole day each week and to take either the afternoon or the evening off almost every day. Work hard when you work. Mornings are the best times. But never work through both afternoon and evening. And take off part of Saturday and most of Sunday. Use three afternoons for exercise in the open air and three evenings for movies or concerts or plays or for that novel you want to read. Your college work will benefit.

You will be told that classes are the most important thing at college. Don't believe it. President Eliot of Harvard said that if he wished to found a college the first thing he would build would be a dormitory. If there were money left over, he would erect a library and fill it with books. And if he had money to burn he would hire a faculty and build a classroom building. Those of us who are willing to remember find it easy to recollect that the most valuable things that happened to us in college usually happened in our dormitories, and most of them after midnight. We also recall with considerable pleasure the few occasions when we had the time and audacity to enter the college library and just browse among books utterly unconnected with our courses. Somehow we remember those books. We read them not because we had to, but because we wanted to. The difference is tremendous.

You will be told that marks are important. But they are a meager indication of a student's worth. Someday we shall have the courage to scuttle the whole marking system, and with it, I hope, will go that awful and meaningless sheepskin. Marks provide the outward and visible sign of the whole academic tradition. I wish every college student might come behind the scenes and watch his instructors doling out grades on papers and bluebooks. We have such curious foibles. The odds are definitely in favor of a paper read after rather than before dinner. A typewritten paper stands a better chance than one in longhand. And that factor of length! I know one student who got himself an A by sandwiching a dozen pages of economics notes into a long term-paper on Beethoven. It is a matter of record that given the same set of papers twice we will grade them differently. Given the same paper, moreover, various teachers will assign it grades ranging from D to A, even in mathematics. Some departments give as many as 40 per cent of their students A's, while others in the same institution allow only 5 per cent of the same students to get the highest marks.

You have probably been told that your academic record as an undergraduate will make or break your life. That simply is not so. Are you going into teaching? There is not a college president worth his salt who does not know that a Phi Beta Kappa key is small indication of your promise as a teacher. Are you going to professional school? Countless men and women with average grades as undergraduates have done brilliantly in professional school. And in getting jobs, it is what they have been able to do in professional school that counts. Are you going to seek work as soon as you finish college? Letters of recommendation these days cover numerous items which have nothing to do with your academic achievement but are just as important. It would not be true

to say that marks mean nothing, but if you will remember these facts every time you enter a classroom you will be on the right track.

2

Your professors form part of the academic taradiddle too. We stand on little raised platforms, the academic equivalents of the pedestal; we call ourselves "doctors" and smile with patient condescension when mistaken for medical men; we put high-sounding letters after our names; and we march in academic processions, clothed in magnificent medieval costumes. All in all we manage by such devices to convey the impression that we know what we are talking about. To be sure, we are not as pompous as some of our European colleagues in crime. Some of us even have the courage to sit on the same level and at the same seminar table with our students and listen to what they have to say. But it is not difficult to get the impression that your professors are founts of wisdom.

You will be told to take careful notes on their lectures and to commit those notes to memory. This whole business of note-taking is outmoded. Students started taking notes in the Middle Ages, before the printing press was invented. The student wrote his own books. Today, with large college libraries and with textbooks crowding and jostling one another for attention, the taking of notes is anachronistic. What you will do, if you are like the rest of the sheep, will be to produce pages and pages of notes, study them religiously for the examinations, then store them away. If you ever look at them again it will be simply to realize that the information they convey is far better presented in at least a dozen books immediately available, or that it is so thoroughly out of date that the notes are useless.

One of the major instruments of torture in collegiate education is the course examination. By this device the professor is enabled to discover how much of what he has said in class you have committed to memory. The night before the examination you cram the notes into your head. Next morning you enter a room heavy with the atmosphere of suspicion. You leave all notes and books in the hall, and you write on questions the answers to which you will have forgotten within a week, answers which in ordinary life no one in his right mind would ask you to remember because the information is available in the reference books where it belongs. Either you are working under the honor system, an unwitting accessory to the hocus-pocus, or you are annoyed and upset by a proctor who marches around among the desks looking for trouble. The more you understand why you are in college, the less seriously you will take examinations. Some day you may even educate us to the point where we will compose tests which will measure your ability to use your knowledge with originality, rather than your ability to ape teacher. When that day arrives we shall let you bring notes, texts and even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* to examinations. And then you may take examinations seriously.

Now that you are in college and going to classes, pause long enough to ask yourself why *we* are teaching and *you* are learning. In spite of what you may

have heard from us or your high school teachers or your parents, the answer is not that we know the final answers to the problems we are discussing. We are teaching because we have studied carefully subjects in which you are a beginner, and because we have had more worldly experience than you. But neither of these facts makes us omniscient. If the truth be known, there are those of you in our classes who are more intelligent than we are—who will outstrip us in our chosen fields. Question us. Doubt us. Raise objections. Make us think! Avoid us when we measure your achievement in terms of the proximity of your thinking to our own. Welcome us when we admit that we do not know the answers to your questions, when we help you to find your own answers, when we encourage you to consider views with which we do not agree.

3

Why are you going to college? Not to enhance your parents' social position; not to get high marks; not to get the ultimate answers, which not even *we* can furnish. To use our own professional jargon, you come to college to get a liberal education. We must admit that we do not altogether know what a liberal education is, but we have some fairly good ideas on the subject. We do not entirely follow these ideas. None of us, for example, believes that there is a magic in piling up a certain number of hour-credits. Yet, sixty credits and you get your diploma. And that diploma is supposed to admit you to the company of educated men and women. Why not fifty-five, or sixty-five? We do not know. Indeed if you pressed us we should have to admit that some students are liberally educated with thirty credits while others will not belong to the educated company if they take sixty times sixty hours of credit. Do not measure your education by simple arithmetic.

Elect your courses with care. If you go to a college which requires that you juggle five courses at once, you will do well to find one easy berth and sleep in it; otherwise you cannot do justice to the other four. This is a secret practice acceptable and accepted by all. But in general easy courses should be avoided simply because they are easy and do not give you your father's money's worth.

Do not select your courses with an eye to a specific job or type of occupation. More of you will make this mistake than not, and it is one of the most serious you can make. In the first place, we know at least that a liberal education involves a balance and harmony of interests. Secondly, your interests and talents are by no means fully appreciated or explored when you come to us. You do not want to wake up in your senior year and wish that you had not missed many important and interesting things. Thousands of seniors do.

When you come to college you are intellectually very young and have not yet learned to proceed safely or efficiently under your own intellectual power. You are what your environment and your elders have made you. Your ideas are not your own. The first thing you must learn is to stand on your own ideas. This is why you should not take us and our ideas too seriously. Broaden your horizon so that as you become more and more able to take care of your-

self you will move intelligently. Do considerable mental visiting in your first years in college. Try to encounter the major points of view represented on the faculty and among the students. Entertain them the more seriously the more they differ from your own. You may return to your own, but if you do it will be with greater tolerance and broader understanding.

You come to college to gain a liberal perspective. In gaining this perspective you must come to know the nature which surrounds and compels you, the society with which you must live and cooperate, the creative spirit which is your heritage, and the tools of language and of thought. To express it in this specific manner is helpful. It suggests certain intellectual virtues which you must possess before you can be considered an educated man or woman. This does not mean that there are particular courses which can alone provide you with these virtues. Do not take a course solely for its specific content.

For example, we have said that you must come to know the natural world. This does not mean that you must study physics *and* chemistry *and* astronomy *and* geology. It means that you must acquire the scientific attitude, understand the atmosphere and significance of the exact sciences, know their fundamental assumptions, their key concepts, their major contributions. And the same is true of the biological sciences. A course in botany *or* zoology *or* physiology *or* psychology is enough to give you an understanding of the important aspects of biology. You have not time for them all. But one is essential. Far too many are ignorant of the biological forces affecting human conduct. You should get into the laboratory while you are in college, and you should work in both the exact and the biological sciences.

You want also to know the society with which you must live and cooperate. And one of the ways in which you want to know it is the historical. You must be historically minded. You must recognize the importance of the past for the present. Man learns by experience, and history is social experience. Greek, Roman, European, American history—you cannot study them all, *but* you can become historically minded. And you can become socially minded in your view of the present world. Economic, social and political forces have your world in their grips. You must study these forces, measure them, evaluate them.

Our heritage in the field of the arts has always been recognized as liberalizing. Not so much need to urge you here. Most of the greatest interpretation of human living is to be found in painting, sculpture, music and literature. What are some of the things which the great creative geniuses have told us about ourselves? What are modern artists trying to do? You must find out these things, not just that you may go to museums and concerts, but that you may *want* to go to museums and concerts. Elect some art or music, for pleasure, but also to increase your knowledge. Also, get a full and enthusiastic knowledge of the literature of your mother tongue. You will have discovered a source of wisdom, good taste and pleasure. Such studies need no recommendation.

Finally, you must come to understand the tools of language and of thought. And here urging is necessary. You ought to know another language, ancient

or modern, inflected or non-inflected, so well that you dream in it. Such knowledge gives a far better understanding of your own tongue, both as a tool and as an art, than you could otherwise obtain. And you will have open to you another literature. Furthermore, you should be conversant with the structures and powers of thought as an intellectual tool, and you should be willing to examine fundamental assumptions. Mathematics, logic and philosophy are helpful here. You may think them difficult, but do not avoid them altogether.

If you will examine this program for the enlarging of your intellectual horizon you will see that it involves some eight subjects spread throughout the departments of your college. It is a program which you can complete in your freshman and sophomore years and one which you should carry through in order that you may be equipped intellectually to proceed to the second part of your college education. It will give you necessary breadth.

4

But you must also specialize, when the foundation has been laid. You must do this not because specialization will prepare you for a specific job, but because a certain degree of specialization is the second essential of true intellectual endeavor. Without specialization your college work is in danger of becoming that thin veneer of "culture" which we all recognize as superficial. And now you will find the faculty more cooperative. We are specialists and we like to encourage specialization. But still be on your guard, for we shall mislead you by overemphasizing the importance of our particular little corners of learning. The important matter is not *what* you specialize in, but that you specialize. Specialization for its own sake, that is my point. If you are going on to graduate work you will find the overwhelming advice of graduate school faculties to be that you specialize in *anything but* your subject of graduate study. If you are going into medicine, you might major in history. If you will be a lawyer, major in art or music.

Even your specialization should be carefully planned. In the first place, it will probably be advisable for you to do advanced work in each of the four major fields of study: natural science; social science; art and literature; and language, mathematics or philosophy. If you studied chemistry as a freshman, you might go on to more advanced chemistry and take elementary astronomy or geology as allied work. In short, in each major field in which you took two elementary courses as an underclassman, you should follow one elementary course into advanced work and at the same time gain some knowledge in an allied field.

But this will take only half of your time as an upperclassman. You should devote the other half of your last two years to intensive specialization in one subject in which you have the greatest interest and for which you have shown marked talent. Perhaps you have found history the most absorbing of subjects. Good! Go on in it. Devote half of your junior and senior years to history. Show that you can work intensively on the details of your chosen major, manipulate these details correctly, and fit them into a comprehensive

picture of the whole. But remember—though your teachers will work against you here—remember that you are studying primarily for the sake of the intensive specialization and not of the history. Your roommate is getting the same thing from majoring in mathematics or English literature.

When you have avoided the Scylla of heterogeneous meanderings among elementary facts and concepts and the Charybdis of a study so narrow that you are ignorant of what is going on outside your own little corner of interest, you will have intellectual balance and perspective. Do not take us as your models. We represent a special world and we are an academic people. You are going into a broader world and a non-academic environment. Make us realize that our interests and understandings should spread into every field. Make us see that our students are at least as important as the subjects we teach. Make us understand that marks and examinations are mere administrative conveniences to be taken far less seriously than we take them. In short, insist that we get together as a unified organization and provide you with a liberal education. Strength to you! If you will do these things you will be performing a service to us and to yourselves.

GEORGE BOAS (*b. 1891*) has devoted his life to teaching, first at the University of California, and, since 1921, at the Johns Hopkins University, where he is Professor of the History of Philosophy. Some of his works are *The Major Traditions of European Philosophy* (1928), *Our New Ways of Thinking* (1930), *Philosophy of Poetry* (1933), and *Romanticism in America* (1940). Mr. Boas was a Commander in the United States Navy during World War II.

FRESHMAN ADVISER

WE ARE sitting pencil in hand, surrounded by college catalogues, rules and regulations, directories, handbooks, mimeographed slips with last-minute changes of courses on them, folders with big cards for the students' records, pads with two carbons on which to write out schedules. We are all washed and clean, fresh from a summer in which we were supposed to rest and which we spent making enough money to fill out the gap between our salaries and a living wage. We are all resigned to the winter that is before us, teaching, coal bills, committee meetings, those tonsils of Susie's, academic freedom, subscription to the Symphony, student activities, what price a decent pair of shoes . . . We smile at each other and sigh at the mass of paper. We have never learned all the rules. How can anyone learn them? Different ones for students in the college of arts and sciences, pre-meds, engineers.

"Freshman Adviser." Reprinted from *Harper's Magazine*, July, 1930, by permission of the author.

But what are rules anyway?

Here they come. . . .

His name is Rosburgh van Stiew. One can see he is one of the Van Stiewes—and if one can't, he'll let one know soon enough. That suit of fuzzy tweed, that regimental cravat, that custom-made shirt. Right out of *Vanity Fair*. Already he has the Phi Pho Phum pledge button in his buttonhole.

He speaks with a drawl. It is the voice of his mother's *face-à-main*. He has slightly wavy blond hair—his mother still has a crinkly white pompadour, like Queen Mary's. He has weary eyes.

No use to smile.

"Very well, Mr. Van Stiew. Have you any idea of the courses you'd like to take?"

"No . . . aren't there some things you sort of have to take?"

"Freshman English and Gym."

"Well, I may as well take them."

"History?"

"Do you have to?"

"No. You can take Philosophy, Political Science, or Economics instead."

Mr. Van Stiew tightens his cravat.

"Guess I'll take History."

"Ancient or modern?"

"Well—when do they come?"

"Modern at 8:30, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays; Ancient at 9:30, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays."

"Oh, Ancient."

Mr. Van Stiew looks shocked that one should have asked.

One shouldn't have.

"Very well, Ancient History."

That leaves three more courses.

"One of the fellows said to take Art Appreciation."

"Yes, you could do that. But sooner or later you are required to take French and German and a laboratory science."

"Couldn't I put them off until next year?"

"You can until you're a senior."

"I think I'll put them off then. I don't want too heavy a schedule."

"Mathematics?"

"Do I have to?"

"It all depends. What are you going to major in?"

"Do I have to major?"

"More or less."

"When do I have to decide?"

"Next year."

So it goes with Mr. Van Stiew. He is using his right of election, his free will. His personality must not be crushed. He will have a Liberal Education, be a member of the Tennis Team, the Dramatic Club, and manager of the Glee

Club. And as a prominent alumnus, he will see to it that the Football Team is never oppressed by a fastidious faculty.

Enter Mr. William Hogarth.

Hogarth is from the city Technical High School. Engineer. Red hair, freckles. Ready-made blue serge.

"Math, Physics, Philosophy, German—why can't I take Chemistry too? I'll make up my French this summer. . . . No, can't take any Saturday classes, working at the Universal Clothing Outlet Saturdays."

"English Literature?"

"Do I have to? . . . All right, Professor, put it down. Where do I get my text books? Don't they have any second-hand ones? . . . Classes begin tomorrow? All right. . . . Yes, I know about the Physical Exam. Had it already. . . . No, I guess I know everything now."

"If you need any information, Mr. Hogarth, I'm in my—"

"Thanks, don't believe I will."

He's gone.

Woof! One lights a cigarette.

A presence is before one, grinning. Lots of yellow hair parted in the middle, rising on each side of the part and falling like too ripe wheat. Head slightly to one side. Very red face.

Timidly shoves forward receipted bill from the Treasurer's Office.

Fred Wilkinson.

Mr. Wilkinson doesn't know what he's going to major in as yet—"you see, I may not stay here four years." A glance at his high-school record makes that more than probable.

"English and Physical Training, that is, Gym."

"Can't I be excused from that?"

"Have you a physical disability?"

"I'm not sure . . ."

"Well, we'll put it down anyway and you can talk it over with the doctor."

"French? German?"

"I'm not very good on languages."

"Mathematics?"

"Heavens, no!"

"Philosophy?"

"What's that?"

"It's—it's part of the business of philosophy to find out, Mr. Wilkinson."

One stops in time.

"I don't believe you'd like Philosophy. Physics? You have to take one science."

"Isn't there one where you take a trip in the spring?"

"Geology?"

"Is that where you study rocks and things?"

"Yes." God forgive me.

"I guess I'll take that."

"History?"

Quick response. The eyes actually grow bright.

"Oh, yes, History. My brother said to take History."

"Good, that's that anyway. . . . Ancient or Modern?"

"A—what?"

"Ancient or Modern?"

Mr. Wilkinson looks as if he were going to cry. His lower lip seems to swell. His eyes blink. But he is only thinking.

"Which do you study Keats and Shelley in?"

"Which History course?"

"Yes. My brother studied Keats and Shelley. That's the course I want. Don't they come in History?"

"They are undoubtedly a part of history" (one grows pontifical) "but I don't believe they usually are discussed in the History courses."

"I'm sure my brother studied them here."

"Maybe it was the History of English Literature."

"Would that have Keats and Shelley?"

"I imagine so."

Mr. Wilkinson is dubious.

"Well, I tell you, Professor. Couldn't you put it down, and then if it isn't all right maybe I could change it afterwards. I could change it, couldn't I, you know, if I didn't like it, if they didn't teach Keats and Shelley in it? I could change it, couldn't I?"

Why not? Mr. Wilkinson will flunk out at mid-term anyway.

So we go.

The pad of the three carbons grows thinner and thinner. The atmosphere grows thicker and thicker. The advisers grow stupider and stupider. The day grows shorter and shorter. By night all schedules are made. Tomorrow classes will begin. And after tomorrow Mr. Van Stiew, Mr. Hogarth, Mr. Wilkinson, and the rest will begin dropping courses, adding courses, shifting courses about until they have left of their original schedules only English Literature and Gym which are required in the Freshman year.

IRWIN EDMAN *Year after year the name of Irwin Edman finds its way into anthologies designed for use in college English classes.*

*This fact is not surprising. A long experience in instruction at Columbia, where he has been a member of the Department of Philosophy since 1918, has earned him a reputation for fine teaching; and contact with students has preserved an ability to write with warmth and understanding that appeal alike to the undergraduate and the reading public which takes The New York Times and the outstanding literary periodicals. Edman's *Philosopher's Holiday* (1938) has been recommended for students, who find it much like a conference with a wise and understanding counselor and friend. A member of the editorial board of The American Scholar, Professor Edman, who is represented in this text by two selections, is for all time associated with New York City; born there, educated there*

(Columbia), teaching there, and writing there, he has never had any other "permanent" address.

IN DEFENSE OF PROFESSORS

THE CONGRESS of the United States, in its action of practically prohibiting professors from having any part in the administration of the OPA, cannot be said to be altogether unrepresentative of the opinions of the American people. Generally speaking, that people has long made up its mind that professors—and not of economics only—know too much to know anything in particular, that they are too theoretical to be practical, that they are "abstract" and not "concrete." There is a popular conviction that professors move airily among generalities, that they have dreams rather than programs, and that the chief reason they so rarely can make clear what they are talking about is that they themselves do not know what it is.

This article is written in the perhaps hopeless attempt to acquit professors as a class of charges against them that are as old as the Republic, even older. It is a well-established American habit to attack, or at least to ridicule, professors. It is worth examining why the sport is so popular and why its implications are so much more serious than mere sport. It is not a bad moment, while the whole business of higher education is being reconsidered in the interval brought about by the war, to reconsider, too, the public attitude toward the professors who staff higher education, and the public estimation of the kind of knowledge for which they are the symbol. It is worth asking whether they are as impractical and irrelevant as they are commonly alleged to be. It is, even more, worth considering whether there is not something to be said for the theoretical, the intellectual, the detached, the abstract—something to be said for the public importance of these traits so often held in popular disdain.

The word "professor" is the target of attack not because professors are personally disliked. The stories about their absent-mindedness are for the most part affectionate as well as untrue. There is to them personally an amiable though quizzical deference. There is even puzzled admiration of the quixotic qualities of grown men willing to spend their lives so impractically, without much promise either of fortune or of fame.

The feeling against "professors" is the feeling long current against all "intellectuals" in America, a sentiment not surprising in a commonwealth that has only recently shaken off the atmosphere of the pioneer and the frontier. The frontier, whether geographical or industrial, has all sorts of immediate crises requiring quickness, resourcefulness, streamlined rapidity of judgment. The speculative mind, the detached imagination, the long-term research, the

"In Defense of Professors," from *The New York Times*, October 3, 1943. Reprinted by permission of the author and publishers.

unhurried meditation are at a discount where things need to be done quickly, promptly, with boldness, if they are to be done at all. In a society given over, as was America in the late nineteenth century, to rapid industrial expansion and rapid acquisition of wealth, practical success, technical efficiency, audacity, ruthlessness were the important virtues.

They are so again in wartime. Now as then there seems to be little place for minds absorbed in analyzing the nature of reality or the structure of forgotten languages or the origins of history.

There is, however, another apparently contradictory reason why there has been so great a distrust of professors in this country. For all our industrial and inventive progressiveness, socially and spiritually ours has been a society conservative in its temper. Most professors are conservative enough, in all conscience. They display rather more than most other middle-class people the traits of the genteel tradition; Caesar's wives, they were called by the late literary critic, Stuart Sherman, who had long been one of them. Caesar's wives, he reminded us, must be above suspicion.

But professors do deal in ideas, and ideas are by nature disquieting. Ideas upset established prejudices. They are variations upon habit; they are criticisms, in the light of reason, of routine assumptions. Many a parent has been upset by notions that their children have brought home from college, not because the notions were widely revolutionary, but because they happened to be a little different from those current when those parents were young.

The professor has become a symbol of all the faults that a practical, pioneering, gadget-loving, success-loving and, withal, tradition-loving society has found in a class given over primarily to the pursuits of the mind. The war has served to sharpen that feeling. At least, in peacetime it seemed as if professors might be relatively harmless tutors to the young. But the young, or most of the male ones, are now tutored by sterner hands for sterner purposes.

If this is "no time for comedy," it is certainly not held to be a time for theory. There is only one department of intellectual activity that has been exempted from public suspicion. Often popular magazines will feature pictures of white-jacketed scientists preparing doses of vitamins or holding out new plastics or new toothpastes. In the newspaper headlines, a "scientist" means the inventor of a gadget. The war has made clear how useful science is. Even the least abstruse-minded know that radar enables observers to detect planes at a distance in a fog or in total darkness. Thus, the public can see some use right now for professors of applied science.

But theoretical science has never seemed very important to the general public and Einstein is probably the only pure scientist with a wide, popular reputation. Indeed, if there is one charge that in one form or another is leveled against professors of all branches (not of economics alone), it is that they are too theoretical. Their notions are supposed to be compounded of vague generalities mixed with utopian dreams of speculation without point and without basis.

The prejudice against the mere theorist is very old. Aristophanes accused

Socrates of wandering around in a kind of cloud-cuckoo land. Of the very first recorded philosopher, Thales, in the sixth century B.C., we know very little, but the little we do know about him is the story that he fell into a well while contemplating the stars. Old Thales of Miletus has on the ground of this legend alone become almost the archetypal fool of the intellectual life. The intellectual ever since has been satirized as the man, starry-eyed with wonder, who cannot see the hole in the ground before him, and who has not the sense to make sure of his next step.

In ordinary times the intellectual life is tolerated as a harmless indulgence for those who like it. It is regarded by the general public as a form of play, though a very odd one, less vigorous than tennis, and less entertaining than bridge. But during a crisis, during a war, or during a depression, the habit of intellectual inquiry for its own sake—frankly the chief concern of a genuinely intellectual mind—becomes suspect.

Now, there are two defenses, almost at opposite poles, of that intellectual life for its own sake, which, in the popular imagination, is typified by professors. The first is that pure theory is often unexpectedly of the most amazing practical importance, if its fruits are not always immediately noticeable. The second is that the quality of civilization itself may be measured almost by the degree to which it has nourished an interest in ideas for their own sake.

As for the practical uses of the most apparently abstract researches: Michael Faraday was one of the greatest of theoretical physicists. He was certainly not thinking about your radio, but, without Faraday's researches all radio and all electronics would have been impossible. Progressive and practical-minded educators condescended for a generation to mathematics and pure science; it needed the urgencies of a global war to remind us of how important pure mathematics and theoretical physics may be in the highly practical business of saving the freedom of the world.

Nor is it research into physics and chemistry alone that may turn out to be of unexpected importance. Art historians are busily helping the Allied armies in their delicate task of saving the art treasures of Europe while destroying the enemies of art and thought and civilization. But while one or another special branch of knowledge is acknowledged to be useful, the basic habit of intellectual wonder, the cultivation of theoretical curiosity, these, out of which so much practical achievement grows, are not often celebrated. The adventures of the mind are less picturesque than the white jacket and the test tube. And genuine intellectual curiosity is so rare that it does not appeal to many readers.

But there is a better and subtler reason than practicality why the life of theory—that is to say, the life of the mind—should be defended, or why, more accurately, it needs no defense. Civilization does not consist of complicated contraptions run by robot experts. If it did, Germany would have most of the merits of a civilized society. Civilization involves a conception of a way of life, a consideration of purposes and ends, a sense of whys and wherefores, of ori-

gins and destinies. A very wise Englishman, Dr. A. J. Lindsay, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, and liaison officer between the British universities and the British armies, said to some friends in America recently: "I interviewed some young German prisoners recently. They were wonderfully skilled and technically trained. But they had no education; they were robots. It was frightening."

The professor is, by the nature of his business, the inquirer and the teacher, ideally speaking. Theory in Greek means vision. The business of the intellectual inquirer and the purpose of education in the habit of intellectual inquiry are to keep alive and growing a vision of the fundamentals or, in other words, the principles, of existence. The business of education is to keep the mind active, to keep it from being caked with routine and regimentation.

A fanatic has been defined as one who redoubles his energies after he has forgotten his aim. The student of ideas, of arts, of sciences for their own sake, keeps us alive to the ends of our civilization, makes us constantly consider what they are. In that sense a professor of some tradition of art or science or thought is a trustee of the civilization of the West. If to have intellectual vision is to be visionary, he is a visionary.

But without vision, as we have been told, a people perish. Without a clear and detached examination of means and ends, purposes and ideals, the nation becomes the slave of its prejudices, the victim of its gadgets, the casualty of its passions. The destinies of the world are as never before going to involve judgments in terms of certain broad and fundamental principles. And since the decisions are going to be made by millions, it is the business of education, and of the professors to whom it is entrusted, to keep the habit of basic understanding alive. "Professor" is an easy sneer. But the alternative to the pedagogue with his "theory" is the demagogue with his screams.

ERNEST O. HAUSER *The writing career of Ernest O. Hauser (b. 1910) has taken him to many parts of the world. He went first to the Far East as a youngster and much of his writing, including two books (Shanghai: City for Sale, 1940; and Honorable Enemy, 1941), are concerned with that background. The material for the following article, which describes the appalling sacrifices made by the Chinese to continue university education in the midst of chaos, was gathered when Mr. Hauser was attached as a war correspondent to General Chennault's Flying Tigers. He says, "I had spent a good deal of time in Chungking before this, and I felt that China's hope was the young intellectuals around the campus, rather than the Chungking politicians."*

POVERTY CAMPUS

JIMMY SUN is now a junior in the Department of Aeronautical Engineering at Southwest Associated University in Kunming. His real name of course is not Jimmy, but the name has stuck to him ever since his middle school days in Peking and, as Jimmy hopes to go to America someday, he does not exactly discourage its use. For the time being, he is plodding ahead under the tattered banners of Chinese scholarship and, like thousands of other young boys and girls on the campuses of Free China's wartime universities, he does not exactly know where he is going. Jimmy Sun is China's problem child.

You will find him in his dormitory on the Southwest campus, and the best time to see him is in the late afternoon when he is taking it easy after a hectic day filled to the brim with classes and homework. The campus is a mile or so outside the north gate of the old city wall, but if you are looking for imposing buildings such as would befit the country's outstanding institution of higher learning, you are likely to walk past the campus and hit, half a mile to the west, the terminal of the Burma Road. In fact, the campus resembles a barracks rather than a university. It consists of some eighty low, gray-colored hovels, built of mud bricks and covered with straw thatch or corrugated-tin roofs. There is a drab uniformity about the place; you have no way of telling classroom buildings, administrative buildings, mess halls and dormitories apart.

Jimmy's dorm is a poorly ventilated, sadly crowded and cluttered-up place that reminds you of the cramped and stuffy steerage quarters of an old China coaster. The passengers on this four-year voyage live and sleep in double-deck bunks half covered by torn mosquito nets, with suitcases, boxes, books, wash basins and clothes jammed into the spaces on top and below, and their washing dangling from lines strung between the bedposts.

He was seated, when I first met him, behind the rickety table which he shares with the occupants of three other bunks. The table was decorated with a sprig of pink blossoms stuck in an old wine bottle. Jimmy is a tall, lean fellow of twenty-two. He wears his long black hair combed back over his high forehead; he has a pair of quick-moving, intelligent eyes and well-formed, sensitive hands. The fact that he is slightly underweight does not seem to interfere with his buoyancy—he greeted me with a vigorous handclasp.

"Welcome to our Grand Hotel," he said in English. "We are always happy to meet foreigners—it keeps us from going stale. Would you like to see the sights?" I said I would and we went for a stroll around the campus. Like a good guide, Jimmy began with the history of the place.

Southwest is a university in exile. It consists of three of the nation's most distinguished schools, two of which (Tsing Hua and Peking National Uni-

"Poverty Campus," from *The Saturday Evening Post*, November 6, 1943. Reprinted by permission of the author.

versities) were located in Peking, and the third (Nankai), in Tientsin. When the Japanese overran North China in 1937, these universities packed up and started on the long trek into the interior. Since the beginning of the war, more than eighty colleges and universities have preferred such helter-skelter house-moving to remaining in the limbo of occupied China. Whatever news there is from home is sad. The enemy's treatment of some of China's old schools clearly showed his hatred for the free and independent spirit which challenged him from their classrooms. Nankai was bombed and the ruins set afire by the Japanese; there is nothing left of the fine campus and imposing buildings in Tientsin. Tsing Hua is being used, in the main, as a hospital for Japanese soldiers and some of the residential quarters have been turned into brothels. The biological laboratory is a stable and one of the classrooms serves as a bar. Peking National, in the opinion of those who loved it, has had the worst fate of the three—the Japanese are operating it as a puppet university.

Naturally, in the chaos and the confusion of the sudden attack it was impossible to move the students all at once. They left in groups, with the largest group consisting of about three hundred students and a dozen professors who negotiated the distance of 2000 miles by river boat and truck, but mostly on foot. Other groups and stragglers came trickling in and, in the spring of 1938, the three universities were able to set up shop again in Kunming, the capital of Yünnan province, with a total enrollment of some eight hundred students and a faculty of a hundred and fifty. To appreciate the mere physical proportions of the move, think of Harvard, Columbia and Dartmouth leaving the Eastern seaboard to re-establish themselves in amalgamated form in the suburbs of Salt Lake City, crossing most of the continental United States without the benefit of railroads, busses, hotels and the other amenities of the twentieth century.

A STUDENT'S ODYSSEY

"We've got almost three thousand students now," Jimmy told me, "and of course all of the original 'pilgrims' are gone. But even now most of the freshmen come from occupied China, with the coastal districts around Shanghai accounting for the largest number. Kwangtung province, around Hong Kong, is next, and quite a few, like myself, have made their way down from Peking. It is remarkable how the kids keep coming in. A bunch of them arrived from Shanghai only last week. It took them forty-four days and they lost one of the girls en route, but here they are, working hard already!"

Jimmy himself arrived in a group of half a dozen boys two and a half years ago. His odyssey is worth recording. Like most of China's wartime students, he belongs to the middle class, which has taken a bad mauling from war and inflation. His father was a well-to-do businessman in Peking, whom the Japanese ran out of business and forced back to his ancestral village in Shantung province. Jimmy has not heard from his parents since his departure. When he left he stuffed his best suit and a few books into an old Chinese traveling bag and walked toward the Japanese lines wearing a faded blue cotton gown that made him look like a local merchant. He had memorized a fairly convincing

story of how he was going to see his relatives in a small town ninety li away but, nevertheless, felt his palms get clammy as he approached the gendarmerie station where Japanese and puppet officers examined all luggage.

If they saw his books and his foreign-style suit they would ask a lot of questions and possibly send him back, or arrest him on the spot. Friends who had traveled this way before had told him of the heads of freedom-seeking Chinese students stuck up on the walls of Japanese-held cities, as warnings to other prospective émigrés.

But Jimmy was lucky. An old man just ahead of him had caused a minor incident. When the gendarmes had opened his bag, a huge rat jumped out of it and everyone present went chasing after it for a minute or two. This gave Jimmy a chance to slip through unnoticed, and he took it, never bothering to learn why the old man was transporting a rat. Later, he established contact with Chinese guerrillas, who convoyed him safely through no man's land, and he and his companions made their way from station to station along one of the routes of the Chinese Underground which, from the slavery of the occupied areas, leads straight to freedom. At some of its stations he even obtained some money and food, just enough to carry him to the next town. Once he succumbed to hunger and exhaustion and had to spend a week in a farmhouse living on cornmeal and water until he was well enough to move on. He arrived in Kunming three months after leaving Peking, his feet all raw flesh and blisters.

As we went sauntering around the campus, the boys and girls of Southwest were walking past us in groups and pairs, or all by themselves, engrossed in a paper or in meditation. They were a motley-looking crowd. The boys were dressed in a great variety of garments ranging from long Chinese gowns to more or less unusual combinations of foreign-style jackets, shirts, sweaters and trousers. The girls, looking neater than the boys, were wearing simple Chinese cotton dresses, and they had bobbed hair. Some even sported high-heeled shoes, obviously the only footwear they managed to salvage when they left their treaty-port homes. How the high heels survived the trek is a mystery.

Southwest now has five colleges—arts, science, law, engineering and normal training. Engineering has the largest enrollment, especially the mechanical and electrical branches.

TOWARD CHINA'S TOMORROW

"It is the safest bet if you are thinking of your career," Jimmy explained, "and it gives you a chance to help build China's future. The government encourages us to take up engineering. All the graduates are snapped up right away and some of the boys have three or four offers before they leave school. They go into heavy industries and communications and all sorts of reconstruction work. Economics is next. Most of the graduates get pretty good jobs with the government and the banks; China needs plenty of trained accountants and statisticians. Arts is deserted, more or less"—Jimmy grinned—"I suppose

in some of those philosophy classes the prof has to spend the time twiddling his thumbs and talking to himself."

It was different with the girls, he said. The majority of them, it seems, envisage secretarial careers. Of the few hundred girl students now enrolled at Southwest most take up accounting or English, hoping to get in with the government or an industrial concern. Some study electrical engineering, which may land them a job in broadcasting, and there are a few in poetry and philosophy. "I guess they figure on getting married sooner or later, anyway," Jimmy said, grinning again. There are probably more budding romances on the campus now than ever before. Both boys and girls are lonesome and homesick and they form attachments easily.

The girls, however, are not butterflies. They are tough, two-fisted patriots who voluntarily forsook the easier life of the coastal cities for the impecunious freedom of the interior.

They are little blockade runners in their own right who braved Japanese sentries and walked out of the occupied zone, singly or in pairs, roughing it all the way west. They have earned their independence the hard way and their equality with the boys is unchallenged, an achievement implying an advance of centuries when you consider that in many cases their mothers still have bound feet and cover up their faces on meeting a stranger.

Two or three late classes were going on and, as the mud-hut classrooms would not hold all the students, the overflow members were lined up outside, listening through the open windows and taking notes with paper braced against one another's backs. Daisies were in bloom in some filled-in bomb craters. The craters were left by a special visit twenty-seven Japanese bombers paid the campus in 1941. Near by, a basketball game was in full swing. On the whole, Jimmy told me, there was little time for such extra-curricular activities.

"You've got to keep your nose to the grindstone all the time," he said. "This isn't like the old days." On the entire campus I did not see anyone who seemed to be dawdling.

We looked into the library, a large barnlike affair with a hard mud floor. Dozens of black crows noisily coasted around in the air space or perched aggressively on bookcases and tables. Most of the chairs were occupied and everybody seemed completely absorbed in his books and notes. Nobody seemed to notice the crows. Apparently a good many students were doing their homework here, as the dormitories were overcrowded. The trouble was, Jimmy said, that most of them had to wait their turn for hours before they could get the book they wanted.

"Look at those shelves; it is all we've got," he said. "Naturally, we had to leave our library behind and could bring only what we could carry in our hands. Before the Burma Road was cut we were able to obtain some books from abroad, contributions from our friends in America and England. Now we can't get anything. Along the Burma Road of the air, books get the lowest priority, and I guess that is right too."

The intellectual blockade to which Free China is subjected is, in many re

spects, worse than the economic blockade. While the shortage of fuel, goods and machinery paralyzes industries and communications and sends prices skyrocketing, the dearth of standard textbooks, technical books and periodicals eats away at China's substance in a more subtle, less obvious way. It affects the youth which will be charged with the Herculean task of postwar reconstruction, and thus does incalculable harm to the China of tomorrow.

"We don't even get American papers and magazines that might tell us what goes on in the rest of the world," said Jimmy Sun. "Twenty of us have to share one book. It slows up everything. Last spring, a volume of aerodynamics arrived from the United States. How do you imagine we received it? Torn up into sheets, and mailed in a dozen envelopes!"

What goes for the library goes for the laboratories of Southwest. The university arrived in Kunming empty-handed and the equipment it could get by mail order before the doors shut tight would hardly meet the requirements of a small-town middle school. I went through some of the labs in the chemistry department and found them pathetic in their extreme inadequacy, their crude improvisations and their flimsy makeshift. But they were also inspiring, because it must have taken a good deal of imagination to create some of the apparatus I saw. Old bottles, wooden crates, wire and plenty of good-natured, stubborn Chinese mule sense went into the improvising of the equipment. Jimmy himself, who wants to be a designer of airplanes and who sometimes dreams of a job with one of the commercial air lines in a peaceful, reorganized China, cannot get the textbooks and models he needs. His department has, however, a wind tunnel for flight experiments.

At six the dinner bell rang. Immediately, everyone started walking briskly toward the refectory. Only two meals are served and the students have to rush if they want to get enough. We arrived in plenty of time. The dining room was another barn equipped with a large number of rather dilapidated tables, but there wasn't a single chair, as Southwest is too poor to provide them. So the students stand up while they gobble their meals, which consist usually of rice and some vegetables. Those who hope to get a second helping of rice have to finish the first in a hurry, while there is still something left in the large rice trough in the center of the hall. Fist fights for the privilege of scraping the bottom of the barrel are a frequent occurrence.

There is no such thing as a balanced diet and the food is deficient both in vitamins and in calories. Eggs, at four Chinese dollars apiece, are out. To get more vitamins, the students are encouraged to eat peanuts, or simply to expose their bodies to the strong Yunnan sun. On red-letter days or special occasions the students' food-purchasing committee obtains an additional allowance for meat, but lately, with the meat price way up, the allowance hasn't been enough to get a pound of pork for each table of eight. Southwest Associated University is broke. War and inflation have melted down to nothing whatever funds there were. As a government university it is supported by the Ministry of Education in Chungking, but prices nowadays rise so rapidly that the budget cannot keep up with them. In the beginning it took \$600,

Chinese currency, to put up one of the mud huts on the campus. Today the same structure would cost \$25,000.

The students, as a result of the poor diet, are undernourished, weak and irritable. When one of them falls sick it takes him twice as long to recover as it should, at his age. There is no resistance to Kunming fever—a mild type of typhus—and to tuberculosis. Because of limited hospital facilities, only advanced cases of t.b. receive attention. Malaria is common and often fatal. Recently the death rate from typhoid fever has been alarmingly high. The students tire easily and have little pep. Every time a public meeting is held on the campus a few will faint before it is over, from weakness.

Hand in hand with the decline of the students' health goes a deterioration of scholastic standards. The students seem fatigued when they turn up for their seven o'clock classes in the morning. There is no freshness or vitality in their approach to the problems presented to them during the day. Their grasp, as well as their memory, is slipping. Besides, teaching has become more of a word-of-mouth process, as it is not always possible to tell a student to go and look something up in the reference books. Though professors still flunk poor students in a desperate attempt to maintain the traditional high level of scholarship, there is an increasing degree of leniency. It seems almost unduly harsh to prolong a student's wretched existence on the campus.

With the constant progress of starvation, it is only natural that students' minds turn to food more readily than to knowledge. Those who get their fingers on a few \$100 bills cannot resist the temptation to go into business. A few enterprising youngsters run restaurants and cigarette stands, or have gone into partnership with outside friends owning tea shops, beauty parlors and second-hand-clothing stores downtown. Others may take a lengthy leave of absence to engage in the smuggling trade between Free and Occupied China. But the great majority are poor as temple mice. They have no income of their own, cannot obtain funds from their families in the occupied zone and must depend on subsidies paid out by the university. Southwest has long ceased to charge tuition fees. "They can't pay us anything; we've got to pay them," a member of the scholarship committee told me. These days, two out of three students are supported by the university.

Jimmy Sun himself receives a meager scholarship, just barely enough to pay for his board. When he applied for it, the expensive tweed suit which he had brought from Peking almost tripped him up, but he succeeded in convincing the committee that it had been acquired in the good old days.

After dinner we had hot cakes in a small co-operative cafeteria run by some students in a corner of the campus and Jimmy was replying to my questions with surprising candor. He said: "I envy the youth in America and Britain and Russia. They all seem to be right in the thick of things, taking an active part in the war. Here in China we cannot help feeling that we are left altogether outside the national effort. Frankly, many of us are puzzled and bewildered."

Conscription, in spite of government pronouncements and threats, has not yet reached into the campus. When it does, students will be put into uniform

as staff and technical officers rather than for combat duty. Up to now, students have joined the armed forces only in rare instances. To understand their attitude of seeming indifference, one must remember the age-old Chinese social stigma attached to soldiering. "Why use good iron for nails—why use good men for soldiers?" In a country inhabited by more people than any other nation on earth, there never was a shortage of manpower; there always were so many "others" to do the fighting and dying. Scholars, enjoying the highest social privileges, were precious as crown jewels. They were few, and they had to be protected and preserved; if too many of them were killed, the future of the nation was at stake. Today, from what I have seen of China's peasant army, I find it difficult to envisage university people in its ranks. They would not fit in. But many of those whom I talked to hope to get in before the war is over, and there is little doubt that the government will mobilize these latent forces as soon as the general level of the army is raised sufficiently.

A number of steps have already been taken with a view to integrating the students into the war effort. During their summer vacations, some of them go about touring the country, under government guidance, doing propaganda and educational work and acquainting the illiterate masses with the problems of this war. Others work on farms, helping with the harvest. Hundreds have left their classrooms and gone into active service as radio operators or as interpreters accompanying the Chinese and American forces in the China-Burma-India theater. Graduate students serve as high-grade technicians with China's few mechanized units. All graduates of medical and pharmaceutical institutions must now serve with the public-health administration of the government for at least two years before they can go into private practice. A beginning has been made, and the governmental effort to make the student war-conscious is expanding.

Still, the absence of a feeling of active partnership with other public and private bodies in molding the destiny of the Chinese nation is a terrific problem. It comes as an anticlimax after three decades of turbulent political agitation on the campuses of prewar China. Ever since modern education did away with the old imperial examination system at the beginning of this century, Western ideas, especially those of Rousseau and Darwin, have had their effect on the impressionable minds of Chinese youngsters. A new urge to do things and to do things better, a new social consciousness which had no roots in Chinese tradition, fired the hearts of students all over China. It manifested itself in riots, street demonstrations, boycotts and strikes and, greatly intensified since World War I, accompanied the political acts of official China like the throb of distant drums.

Peking National University, one of the three constituents of Southwest, was in the forefront of the movement. Its students had a reputation of being highly political-minded, with radical if not revolutionary leanings, ready to start a better world at the drop of a hat. The predominant tendency, however, was nationalism. In the decade before the present war, each new Japanese encroachment on China's sovereignty was greeted by outbreaks of violence and noisy disapproval on the part of the Chinese students. They clamored

for war. One does not easily forget the tense weeks after Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, when incensed students seized locomotives and railroad trains for a "march on Nanking," where they encamped on the steps of the national government, trying to prevail upon Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to declare war on Japan.

Today, the student movement is dormant. To be sure, with the outbreak of the War of Resistance in the summer of 1937, one of its foremost aims—"hit back at the enemy"—was fulfilled. But there are other reasons for the dead calm on the campus, reasons which may have something to do with the intellectual boredom that seems to have settled over China in recent years. Once or twice in the last six years, the old spirit flared up again in sporadic demonstrations against things or doings the students found objectionable, and it is probably safe to predict a spiritual rejuvenation after the war.

THE ROUGH ROAD TO LEARNING

"We do quite a bit of talking on the campus," Jimmy told me, "and there is plenty in what we talk about in our bull sessions that isn't exactly fit for publication."

"Any communists among you?" I asked bluntly.

"Hardly any, and I am telling you the truth. Some of us think that the Reds have made a good contribution to the war effort, but their political program is too negative to appeal to us. For one thing, it is diametrically opposed to the spirit of our alma mater, which is liberalism and individualism in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Another thing you must not forget," he continued, "is that Generalissimo Chiang is very popular with the kids. The students may have fought him ten years ago because he seemed to be procrastinating and appeasing all the time, but now we know that he used those years for careful preparations. After all, we are good patriots. We want to see China remain united, and we pin our hopes on our present government, which has promised to give the people full democracy after the war."

However, poverty, not politics, remains the keynote at present; how to keep alive is the main problem of Southwest Associated. Starving students are taught by starving professors. If you want to see something new in the way of a design for living, you visit the Southwest professors in their homes. As there is no room on the campus and as rents in Kunming today are beyond the reach of scholars, some members of the faculty have taken up quarters for themselves and their families in near-by villages. Transportation to the campus, in most instances, is not available and, to avoid a daily walk of several hours, a number of professors have arranged for half-weekly teaching schedules which allow them to spend three days of the week in their one-room farmhouse domiciles and the remainder in Kunming, where somebody always manages to put up an extra cot for them. Those who have to stay near the campus, because of the heavy work they carry, live in peculiar circumstances which have a touch of dime-novel romance.

The head of the political science department, for example, has made him-

self at home in the gatekeeper's shack of an old graveyard outside the West Gate. Here he lives comfortably, strolling amongst the tombs in his leisure time, pruning the trees and bushes and enjoying the view of the blue mountain range beyond the lake which reminds him of the Western Hills he could see from his study in Peking. "A few years from now, when I have settled down in Peking again, I'll probably be homesick for this," he told me.

Inside the old town, many professors, including some department heads, have turned the private theater of a former war lord into a dormitory for themselves, using the auditorium as a common living room, the stage as a parlor, and the stalls and boxes as bedrooms. They told me they derived a good deal of inspiration from the red-and-golden splendor of their dramatic abode. Five nationally famous scholars share the royal box, where I found them seated on their cots, looking like characters out of a Walt Disney fantasy, half-buried, as they were, by a maze of books, manuscripts, ink bottles, tobacco pouches, cardboard boxes and soiled laundry.

THE AMERICAN TRADITION

The plight of the professors is as alarming as that of the students. Their salaries, including rice subsidies and special allowances, buy scarcely two thirds of the bare essentials needed by themselves and their families. They have used up the modest savings which they brought along in their pockets when they first arrived from Peking. They have sold their extra clothes and even some of their books. Some have taken on outside work such as private teaching jobs, translations, newspaper and magazine writing. All are undernourished, gray-faced and sickly. Yet they carry on in a spirit I could not help admiring tremendously.

"We have a mission to fulfill," one of the inhabitants of the royal box said to me, "and I personally should consider anyone who quits now a deserter. You see, more than half of the entire faculty, including all the deans and practically everyone teaching English, engineering and economics, are graduates of American universities. It is up to us to carry the torch."

America, to those half-starved men of letters, is the hope that keeps their souls alive. American influence has long been a dynamic factor in Chinese education.

"We depend on you for spiritual guidance, just as our armies depend on you for planes and equipment," I was told by Dr. Chiang Monlin, president of Peking National University and former minister of education. Doctor Chiang (California '12, Ph.D., Columbia), one of the outstanding figures in Chinese letters, now serves as a member of the Southwest presidium. The same trend of thought was expressed by Dr. Y. C. Mei, president of Tsing Hua, who shares his authority on the campus, and the words of the two presidents were echoed by everyone I talked to.

Jimmy Sun, after finishing his work in the Department of Aeronautical Engineering, is looking forward to passing the stiff scholarship examination that will send him on his way to the United States. There he expects to take

advanced courses in aviation design and perhaps work in an aircraft plant in California. His trip across, incidentally, will give him his first airplane ride. When he returns to China, he hopes to be "more of an adult," as he puts it. America, he feels, can solve some of his problems and dispel some of his doubts, forging him into a hard, useful link in China's postwar reconstruction front.

He is not afraid of coming back "Americanized." "The line," he says, "is not between East and West, but between the old and the new. The China of tomorrow will be a China led by the kids you see on the campus today. And, believe me, if we don't die of starvation before the war is over, we'll be qualified to assume leadership."

EDWIN R. EMBREE (*b. 1883*), a Nebraskan by birth, was educated at Yale and for some time associated with that university as editor of its alumni weekly, as registrar, and finally as appointments secretary (1907-17). An early interest in writing (he had been a reporter for a time) led him to contribute articles to various magazines and to write books with marked concentration on race study: *American Negroes—A Handbook* (1942) is typical. A frequent contributor to periodicals and a consistent campaigner for better knowledge of man via applied sociology, Mr. Embree eventually became a vice-president of the Rockefeller Foundation, and is now President of the Julius Rosenwald Fund.

CAN COLLEGE GRADUATES READ?

THE STUDENT and His Knowledge," a publication recently issued by the Carnegie Foundation, is the most devastating report yet to appear on higher education in America. While this survey was centered on the schools and colleges of Pennsylvania, it may be regarded as giving a fair picture of education throughout the nation. The careful and intensive studies, made over a ten-year period, included tests in the many phases of education and were designed to discover not only the amount of useful information acquired by students during the college years but their progress in intelligence and understanding.

The results of the study may well undermine the mystical faith which we in America have had in formal education. We gave expression to that faith by building schools and colleges beyond those of any country in human history and by sending our children not only to school but also to college and university in numbers beyond the dreams—or nightmares—of any other na-

"Can College Graduates Read?" from *The Saturday Review of Literature*, July 16, 1938. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

tion. Almost all eligible children are enrolled in elementary schools. And in addition nearly seven million young people are in high schools. This is a high school enrollment of more than two-thirds of all the young people of high school age and is four or five times the percentage of secondary school attendance ever achieved by such enlightened countries as England, France, or Germany. In fact, more children are in high schools in America than in all the rest of the world put together. Another million and a quarter American students are enrolled in those pleasant custodial halls hopefully referred to as institutions of higher learning. We had fondly dreamed that our children would come out of this great educational mill filled not only with information but with insight and understanding.

The study of Pennsylvania schools and colleges indicates that by and large students are not even getting much information, let alone wisdom. The tests proved, among other things, that there is little relation between the time spent at college and the intelligence or achievement records of students. Though on the average college seniors made higher scores than sophomores, twenty-eight per cent of the seniors did not do as well as second year students and ten per cent had lower scores than the average high school senior. It is distressing to learn of the high percentage of brilliant high school graduates who do not go to college as compared with the average who do, for in the tests more than half of the high school students who were to continue their formal education had lower scores in the intelligence and English tests than twenty-five per cent who were not planning to go to college. Even more distressing is the revelation that those college graduates who plan to become teachers are not only less well equipped for these important posts than most of their classmates, but that seven per cent of them made lower scores than thirty-six per cent of the high school pupils.

But the most appalling item in this Carnegie report is a study of students at a single college. Of some fifty brilliant freshmen followed throughout their course, more than two-thirds knew less at the end of junior year than they did during their first year. They had less accurate information and their insights and understanding had been blunted. Scholasticism, routine, and mediocrity had done their perfect work. Commenting on the progressive degradation of these brilliant entering students, the report says:

The fact that minds of this caliber had been obliged through two years to adjust their stride and intellectual sympathies to colleagues, and probably even to some instructors, who were inferior to themselves, cannot have been without its sinister effect. These students obviously had no intellectual purpose or stimulus appropriate to their ability. Although as freshmen they were already beyond that intellectual level at which the college could serve them effectively, they were obliged to use their wits elsewhere and mark time academically for three more years until the calendar should release them.

This whole report is so damning that it compels educators not only to gasp but to try to do something to correct the present evils. Many ideas will be presented and it will be well to give free play to all reasonable suggestions.

No single formula is apt to solve the manifold problems of education. In fact, one of the present evils is that we have supposed that fixed rules and standards and courses could accomplish the very delicate business of education.

My own belief is that a major aspect of sound education is reading. If children learn to read fluently and understandingly, they have acquired the finest of the intellectual tools. If these young people will then proceed to read, they will take care of the greater part of their own education.

Learning to read is an astonishingly delicate and complicated business. It does not consist simply of learning to spell words or to pronounce syllables. It consists chiefly in learning to grasp the quaint symbols of the alphabet in such a way that meaning is conveyed by means of the printed page from the author to the reader. Mechanical skill in reading is a first and essential step, but reading actually takes place only after the initial mechanics is mastered and after the individual begins to get pleasure and understanding from the printed page.

Even in the teaching of the mechanics of reading there must be a close connection between what the child already knows and what is conveyed to him through written words. This is another way of saying that education must have a very close relation to the life of the pupil. Much of the failure both in school and college comes from the fact that we so quickly allow learning to run into scholasticism. Neither the ability to read nor any other kind of learning is an end in itself. Values come only as education tends to enrich the lives of the students and the society of which they are a part. All this seems self-evident, yet waves of argument in behalf of scholastic studies constantly sweep over the country. Schools and colleges are urged from time to time to ignore all current life and to return, for example, to the fragmentary learning of Greece or to the scholastic exercises of the Middle Ages—to “courses,” and “credits,” and “lessons.”

Even the elementary schools easily fall into scholasticism, that is, into rote learning. In work with little rural schools in Southern states I have run on to astonishing examples of this rote learning. In a little school just outside Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the teacher had been hearing a class read a lesson on birds in one of the standard textbooks. To drive home a point from the lesson, she asked a boy, “When do the robins come?”

The pupil answered promptly, “In the fall.”

“Now, Jimmie,” urged the teacher, “read the lesson carefully again.”

After he had droned out the text a second time, she said cheerily, “Now, Jimmie, when do the robins come?”

More hesitantly and sullenly he answered again, “The robins come in the fall.”

“James, James,” shouted the teacher. “Read that lesson again. Now tell me when do the robins come?”

Almost in tears the boy finally answered, “The robins come in the spring.”

And so they do—in Boston, where the text was written. But in Louisiana, just in order to avoid the northern winter, they come in the fall, as the boy well knew. Here we had an all too frequent combination of a stupid teacher,

who was intent on grinding out a "lesson," and a textbook unadapted to the region. The result must have been either to destroy the boy's confidence in his own common sense, or, more likely, to break down completely his respect for book learning.

In its very earliest stages reading must have something to do with the lives of the children. As the school process continues, the child will become educated in direct ratio not to the amount of rote learning which is crammed into him but to the opportunities offered to him for general reading.

The wider the child's reading the better. There is no need to censor or direct his literary pursuits. The thing is to let him read whatever he finds interesting. He will quickly set his own standards if only he begins to get enjoyment and satisfaction from books. I have seen many cases where children were reading avidly what appeared to their parents to be trash, yet in a few years, making their own selections, these children were reading not only much more than their parents but books which, by anyone's standard, were far above the average of their parents' reading.

The present tendency to provide all schools with at least small collections of supplementary texts and stories is probably the most effective movement in modern education. And the trend toward letting the student educate himself by ample reading and study in well-stocked libraries is a similarly wise movement in higher education. Lessons and lectures do not give a student anything that would compare in value, in understanding, even in information, with the knowledge he can obtain by consulting for himself and on his own initiative the works of the masters. I believe that if children were taught to read properly and if secondary schools and colleges, instead of teaching "courses," encouraged and developed a love of reading, a situation such as that reported in Pennsylvania could not exist.

What I have been saying about reading in the early years applies with even greater force to college education. The difference between good and bad teaching is largely the degree to which the teacher eliminates himself, and inspires the student to do his own study and thus to accomplish his own education. This has been recognized in the laboratory more than in the library. Students of chemistry or biology are expected as a matter of course to work out their own problems, observing growth and reaction from the plants and animals and chemicals they use in their own experiments. Only in this way is the study of science anything more than the rote learning of fixed formulae which in themselves may be as poor intellectual equipment as superstitions and old wives' tales. Good teachers—there are still too few—are seeing similarly that in the subjects other than science the student gains nothing by being stuffed with facts. In this highly complex world there are few fixed and dogmatic answers to any questions. Education, even during the college years themselves, is sterile if it simply pumps information into the none-too-receptive brain of the student. And if college is to be thought of as preparation for life, then the student must be lured into finding things out for himself, using the teacher simply as guide and counselor.

My college days go back to that distant era when William Graham Sumner

was teaching at Yale and I had the great good fortune to study with him. His lectures were interesting and inspiring. But the best thing he did for me—and for hundreds of Yale men—was to open up to us the vistas of diverse social systems all over the world. He lured us into balancing the quaint habits of Samoan chiefs and dancing girls against the equally quaint habits of New Haven bankers and debutantes. He sent us scurrying to the libraries to read about the Fijians, the Papuans, and the Hottentots, about British peers, French raconteurs, and German savants. He inspired many of us to get to remote spots of the globe as soon as we could and observe for ourselves the fascinating ways of life which people had built up for themselves about the world.

Old Professor Thomas Seymour did something of the same thing for my generation at Yale by teaching Greek not simply as cross-word puzzles in translation but as a door to the culture and literature of this amazingly creative people. He kept many of us digging in the library for days because he told us—with restrained illustrations—that most of the skits in modern burlesque shows were based on the Comedies of Aristophanes. After prolonged and fascinating research we found that they were.

It has been said that one of the faults of organized education is that the teacher asks the questions, whereas in normal life it is the child and the growing youth who is always doing the asking. And it is the business of the college, the Carnegie report states, to increase rather than to suppress the number of the students' questions. The customary procedure, however, "puts [the student] to bed like a troublesome child by safely tucking him into fixed courses which he can neither hasten nor retard and from which there is no escape. Since he is expected to accept these as they develop, it too often occurs that his curiosity is effectually stilled and his real enthusiasms are gradually diverted to extracurricular concerns in which his own initiative is permitted to count." Certainly true education proceeds as the curiosity of the student is stirred to desire ever greater and greater knowledge and is impelled to reflect and assimilate so that his information may be leavened by understanding.

The Carnegie report, by a systematic survey of the schools and colleges of a whole state, gives damning evidence that there are all too few instances of this kind of education. It makes vehement protest against the rigid course system which gives a student not knowledge and intelligent understanding but disconnected bits of unrelated information. One of the great evils of our system of education, the report states, is the building of the college curriculum around the "average" student when in reality there is no average but a large number of individuals of different grades of intelligence and ability. Each of these students should and must be given the opportunity and the privilege of developing himself unrestricted by what the "average" can or cannot do. The fundamental conclusion of the study, therefore, is that the object of the college or of any other educational institution must be the self-education of the student.

As a basis for aid to this self-education, the report suggests four essentials: (1) The college should have knowledge of the student's mental, physical, and

social attainments so that he may be understood and helped. (2) It should prepare, in the light of the student's own goal, a tentative forecast of what he can hope to achieve. (3) It should make provision for the right kind of teaching—if and as the student himself finds it needed—and for libraries and laboratories which he may use at his convenience. (4) It should provide for regular measurement and analysis of his progress in knowledge and of his character and disposition.

I heartily agree to this four-point program, though it is going to be terribly hard to put it into effect in our large institutions which are accustomed to mass production by routine lectures, assignments in texts, and periodic tests as to the quantity of information acquired. Until the coming of the millennium when schools and colleges, as advocated in this report, will be working with the individual needs of the students, I suggest that a large part of the desired result may be obtained by concentrating on point three, by throwing the burden of education from the teacher to the student. In broad fields of learning the student may well be left to dig out knowledge for himself from the library and the laboratory, the faculty being regarded as aides and assistants to the student rather than as taskmasters to him. A number of colleges are doing this now. Swarthmore is increasingly following this plan for her honor students; the Harvard reading periods and the programs of several experimental colleges are in this direction.

It may be true that many boys and girls now in American colleges are not sufficiently intelligent or responsible to take initiative in their own education. If so the sooner that fact is brought into the open and a divorce effected between these uncongenial parties the better. For if a person cannot take a leading part in his own education at the higher levels, no power on earth can do it for him. A great part of the congestion and confusion in American colleges is caused by the attempt to force education into masses of students who are incapable or unwilling to receive it. The best measure of the student's capacity to be educated is his ability to read and study for himself.

Of course reading does not cover the whole of the development of a well-rounded individual. Skill and expression in many lines are desirable, especially in these days of increasing leisure. But so far as intellectual attainment goes, books are the great tools. Reading is the greatest of the commandments in education: reading for pleasure, reading for information, reading for understanding and insight into personal and social problems. Books and more books in the schools and in the homes are the surest way to produce an educated nation.

H. L. MENCKEN (*b. 1880*) would doubtless label himself a newspaper-man, for he has seldom been out of earshot of the roar of the press, particularly that of the *Baltimore Sun*. A whole generation of Americans, however, will best remember him for the pitiless irony which characterized his attacks on the more glaring absurdities of the American scene. Teamed with George Jean Nathan, with whom he had been associated on *The Smart Set*, he

launched *The American Mercury* in 1924 and continued as its editor until 1933. If some of his earlier work seems dated today, the reason may be found in the fact that he laughed many of our stupidities out of existence. Salty, unconventional, extremely articulate, Mencken has exhibited an energy and versatility seen to advantage in such works as the series of *Prejudices*; *Treatise on the Gods*; *the scholarly American Language*; and recently, *a New Dictionary of Quotations on Historical Principles*.

THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE

THE FIRST Englishman to notice an Americanism sneered at it aloofly, thus setting a fashion that many of his countrymen have been following ever since. He was one Francis Moore, a ruffian who came out to Georgia with Oglethorpe in 1735, and the word that upset him was *bluff*, in the sense of "a cliff or headland with a broad precipitous face." He did not deign to argue against it; he simply dismissed it as "barbarous," apparently assuming that all Englishmen of decent instincts would agree with him. For nearly a century they seem to have done so, and *bluff* lingered sadly below the salt. When it was printed at all in Great Britain it was set off by sanitary quotation marks, or accompanied by other hints of deprecation, as *rubberneck*, *hot spot* and *nerts* are accompanied today. But then, in 1830, the eminent Sir Charles Lyell used it shamelessly in the first volume of his monumental "*Principles of Geology*," and from that day to this it has been a perfectly respectable if somewhat unfamiliar word in England, with a place in every dictionary.

Its history is the history of almost countless other Americanisms. They have been edging their way into English since early colonial times, and, for more than a century past, in constantly increasing volume, but I can't recall one that didn't have to run a gantlet of opposition in the motherland, at times verging upon the frantic. After the Revolution, that opposition took on the proportions of a holy war. Never an American book came out that the English reviewers did not belabor its vocabulary violently. The brunt of the attack, of course, had to be borne by the poetasters of the era—for example, Joel Barlow, whose "*Columbiad*" (1807) loosed a really terrifying geyser of abuse. But even the most serious writers got their share—among them, Jefferson, John Marshall, Noah Webster, and John Quincy Adams. Jefferson's crime was that he had invented the verb *to belittle*. It was, one may argue plausibly, a very logical, useful, and perhaps even nifty word, and seventy-five years later the prissy Anthony Trollope was employing it without apology. But when Jefferson ventured to use it in his "*Notes on Virginia*" (1787) "*The London Review*" tossed and raged in a manner befitting the discovery of a brace of duelling pistols beneath the cope of the Archbishop of Canter-

bury, and for several years following its dudgeon was supported virtuously by most of the other reviews. "What an expression!" roared the "London." "It may be an elegant one in Virginia, but for our part, all we can do is to *guess* at its meaning. For shame, Mr. Jefferson! Freely, good sir, will we forgive all your attacks, impotent as they are illiberal, upon our national character; but for the future spare—O spare, we beseech you, our mother-tongue!"

The underscoring of *guess* was a fling in passing at another foul Americanism. It was the belief of most Englishmen then, as it is today, that the use of the verb in the sense of *to suppose* or *assume* originated in this country. It is actually to be found, in that meaning precisely, in "Measure for Measure" and "Henry VI"; nay, in Chaucer, Wycliffe, and Gower. But such historical considerations have never daunted the more ardent preservers of the King's English. When a word acquires an American flavor it becomes anathema to them, even though it may go back to Boadicea. *To advocate* offers an instructive example. It appeared in English in the dark backward and abysm of time, but during the eighteenth century it seems to have dropped out of general use, though Burke used it. Towards the end of the century it came into vogue in this country, and soon it made its way back to the land of its birth. It was received with all the honors proper to an invasion of Asiatic cholera. The reviews denounced it as loutish, "Gothic," and against God, and lumped it with *to compromit* and *to happify* as proof that civilization was impossible in America, and would be so forevermore. Even Benjamin Franklin, returning from England in 1789, was alarmed into begging Noah Webster to "reprobate" it, along with *to notice*, *to progress*, and *to oppose*. There is no record of Noah's reply, but it is most unlikely that he did any reprobating, for when he began to make dictionaries he included all four verbs, and they have been listed in every considerable dictionary published since, whether in this country or in England.

The leader of the heroic struggle to keep Americanisms out of Britain, in its early stages, was the celebrated William Gifford, editor of "The Quarterly Review." Gifford was a killer in general practice, and his savage assaults on Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats are still unpleasantly remembered. He was the first magazine editor in history to make the trade pay, and when he died in 1828 he left £25,000 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. One of his major specialties was the villainousness of everything American, from politics to table manners and from theology to speechways. Among the allegations that he either made himself or permitted his contributors to make were these: (a) that the Americans employed naked colored women to wait upon them at table, (b) that they kidnapped Scotsmen, Irishmen, Hollanders, and Welsh men and sold them into slavery, and (c) that they were planning to repudiate the English language altogether, and adopt Hebrew in its place. This last charge, as it flew from tongue to tongue, acquired variorum readings. One of them made the new American language an Indian dialect, another made it Greek, and a third was to the effect that the people of Britain would be forced to acquire Greek, thus leaving English to the wicked will of the barbaric Yankees. It all sounds idiotic today, but in 1814 it was taken quite

seriously by many Englishmen. Gifford was a tyrannical editor and so vastly enjoyed slashing his contributors' copy that Southey once denounced him as "a butcherly review-gelder." But anything that was against the damyankee passed his eye unscathed, and he piled up accusations in a manner so shameless that "The North American Review" was moved to protest that if the tirade went on it would "turn into bitterness the last drops of good-will towards England that exist in the United States."

In the early Twenties of that century there was some amelioration, and when Gifford retired from the "Quarterly" in 1824, voices that were almost conciliatory began to be heard. They heaped praises on Niagara Falls, found something to commend in Cooper's "Spy," and even had kind words for the speed and luxuriousness of American canalboats. But my most diligent researches have failed to unearth anything complimentary to the American language. It continued to be treated as a grotesque and immoral gibberish, full of uncouth terms and at war with all the canons of English. Every British traveller who came to these shores between the War of 1812 and the Civil War had something to say about the neologisms his ears and eyes encountered on his tour, and nearly all were constrained to deplore them. Captain Basil Hall, who was here in 1827 and 1828, went about in a palpitating daze, confounded and outraged by the signs on American places of business. *Clothing Store* he interpreted after long thought, and *Flour and Feed Store* after prayer and soul-searching, but what on earth was a *Leather and Finding Store*? Captain Thomas Hamilton, who followed five years later, found it impossible to penetrate to "the precise import" of *Dry-Goods Store*, and when he encountered an establishment offering *Hollow Ware, Spiders, and Fire-Dogs* he gave up in despair.

Hall was not one to take it lying down. He decided to call upon Noah Webster, whose American Dictionary of the English Language had just come out, to find out what the Yankees meant by using the mother tongue so cruelly. Webster shocked him by arguing stoutly that "his countrymen had not only a right to adopt new words, but were obliged to modify the language to suit the novelty of the circumstances, geographical and political, in which they were placed." The great lexicographer "who taught millions to spell but not one to sin" went on to observe judicially that it was "quite impossible to stop the progress of language—it is like the course of the Mississippi, the motion of which, at times, is scarcely perceptible; yet even then it possesses a momentum quite irresistible. Words and expressions will be forced into use in spite of all the exertions of all the writers in the world."

"But surely," persisted Hall, "such innovations are to be deprecated?"

"I don't think that," replied old Noah. "If a word becomes universally current in America, where English is spoken, why should it not take its station in the language?"

"Because," declared Hall with magnificent pertinacity, "there are words enough already."

This heroic dogma is still heard in England, where even native novelties are commonly opposed violently, and not infrequently strangled at birth.

There seems to be, in the modern Englishman, very little of that ecstasy in word-making which so prodigiously engrossed his Elizabethan forebears. Shakespeare alone probably put more new words into circulation than all the English writers since Carlyle, and they were much better ones. The ideal over there today is not picturesque and exhilarating utterance, but correct and reassuring utterance, and one of its inevitable fruits is that bow-wow jargon which Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch describes in "On the Art of Writing" as "the medium through which boards of government, county councils, syndicates, committees, commercial firms, express the processes as well as the conclusions of their thought, and so voice the reason of their being." It is, at its worst, at least in accord with what are taken to be the principles of English grammar, and at its best it shows excellent manners and even a kind of mellifluous elegance; indeed, the English, taking one with another, may be said to write much better than we do—at all events by the standards of the schoolmaster. But what they write is seldom animated by anything properly describable as bounce. It lacks novelty, variety, audacity. There is little juice in it. The reader confronted by it is treated politely and lulled pleasantly, but he seldom enjoys the enchantment of surprise. That diligent search for new and racy locutions which occupied so much of the work day of Walt Whitman and William Dean Howells alike, and is practised so assiduously by scores of saucy Andersons and Hemingways, Sandburgs and Saroyans today, is carried on across the ocean by only a few extravagant eccentrics, virtually all of whom—for example, James Joyce and Ezra Pound—are non- and even anti-Englishmen. The hundred-per-cent English writers, save when they stoop to conscious wickedness, seldom depart very far from the jargon of Quiller-Couch. It is by no means a monopoly of the classes he named, nor is it reserved for solemn occasions. I find it also in my favorite English weekly, the "News of the World," which is devoted principally to sports, the theatres, and the more scabrous varieties of crime, and is probably a far better mirror of England than the "Times." When the "News of the World" reports the downfall of a rural dean or a raid on a Mayfair night club, the thing is done in a style so tight and brittle that nothing to match it is discoverable in this country, at least outside the pages of "The Homiletic Review." "When we want to freshen our speech," Mrs. Virginia Woolf was lately saying, "we borrow from American—*poppy-cock, rambunctious, flip-flop, booster, good mixer*. All the expressive, ugly, vigorous slang which creeps into use among us, first in talk, later in writing, comes from across the Atlantic."

But whether slang or something better, it always encounters opposition—sometimes merely sullen, but at other times extremely violent. At more or less regular intervals, war upon the invasion is declared formally, and there ensues a long uproar, with the papers full of choleric letters to the editor. One such sharpening of activity was loosed early in 1933, when the chief constable of Wallasey, a suburb of Liverpool, reported in alarm that his policemen were being called *cops* by the tougher youngsters of the place, and otherwise insulted with blasphemies picked up from American movies. "*Oh-yeahs*," he said, "are frequent in answer to charges, and we are promised *shoots-up in*

the burg [sic] and threatened to be *bumped off*." Half the amateur publicists who took a hand in the discussion which followed, advocated using the cat on the offenders, and the other half demanded that American movies be barred from England as intolerable public menaces, like cattle infected with foot-and-mouth disease. As usual, the debate ended in philological futilities. Was *oh yeah* actually English, even bad English, insane English? Or was it only an American borrowing from one of the dialects of the savage Red Indians, or maybe from Polish, Pennsylvania Dutch, Gullah, Yiddish, or some other such godless and anti-British lingo? No matter! *Oh yeah* continues to flourish from the Lizard to Unst, and with it *cop* flourishes too. The latter, in fact, has swept upward from the level of bad boys baiting constables to that of bishops following their transcendental occasions. Even before the chief constable of Wallasey sounded his cry of "Wolf!" a right reverend father in God had been charged before the Farnham (Surrey) magistrates with applying *speed-cop* on a public road to a member of the *mobile police*. Overhauled in his car, so the testimony went, he had demanded, "Are you a *speed-cop*?" His Lordship denied with some heat that he had used the term, or anything else so unseemly, but the magistrates apparently concluded that he must have let it slip, for they took a serious view of his very modest adventure in speeding, fined him £10, and suspended his driving license for three months. I give his name and dignities as a warning to lesser evildoers. He was the Right Reverend Cyril Henry Gelding-Bird, D.D. (Oxon.), Assistant Bishop of Guildford and Archdeacon of Dorking, and a man previously unknown to the police.

Whenever an Americanism comes publicly into question in England, there are efforts to track down its etymology, and sometimes the theories offered are extremely bizarre. In January, 1935, for example, the London "Morning Post" opened its columns to a furious and fantastic discussion of the verb-phrase, *to get his goat*. I content myself with one of the explanations: "Among the Negroes in Harlem it is the custom for each household to keep a goat to act as general scavenger. Occasionally one man will steal another's goat, and the household *débris* then accumulates to the general annoyance." The truth is that *to get his goat* seems to be of French origin, and in the form of *prendre sa chèvre*, philological genealogists have traced it back to the year 1585. But whatever is strange and upsetting is put down, in England, to the hellish ingenuity of Americans—save, of course, when genuine Americanisms are claimed as really English. This last happens often enough to give what may be called a cockeyed aspect to the perennial pother. In 1934 even the learned Dr. C. T. Onions, one of the editors of the great Oxford Dictionary, succumbed to the madness by offering to find in the dictionary any alleged Americanism that a reporter for the London "Evening News" could name. The reporter began discreetly with *fresh* (in the sense of *saucy*), *to figure* (in the sense of *to believe* or *conclude*), and *to grill* (in the sense of *to question*), and Dr. Onions duly found them all. But when the reporter proceeded to *bunkum*, the learned editor had to forget conveniently that its progenitor was the thoroughly American *buncombe*, when *rake-off* followed he had to

admit that the earliest example in the dictionary was from an American work, and when *boloney* and *nerts* were hurled at him he blew up with a bang.

Here, of course, Dr. Onions and his interlocutor ended on the level of slang, but there is no telling where they would be if they could be translated to the year 2036. *Boloney*, like *to belittle*, has the imprimatur of an eminent tribune of the people, and is quite as respectable, philologically speaking, as *buncombe*, *gerrymander*, *pork barrel*, *filibuster*, *carpetbagger*, *gag rule*, or *on the fence*. All these came into American from the argot of politics, and got only frowns from the schoolmarm, but they are all quite sound American today, and most of them have gone into English. As for *nerts*, it seems to be but one more member of an endless dynasty of euphemisms, beginning with *zounds* and coming down to *son-of-a-gun*, *gee*, and *darn*. *Darn*, like *nerts*, is an Americanism, and Dr. Louise Pound has demonstrated that it descends from *eternal*, which first turned into *tarnal* and then lost its tail and borrowed the head of *damn*. I have heard a bishop use it freely in private discourse, with a waggish sprinkling of actual *damns*. *Son-of-a-gun* is now so feeble and harmless that the Italians in America use it as a satirical designation for native Americans, who seem to them to fall far behind the Italian talent for profanity and oburgation. It is, I believe, a just criticism. Some time ago I was engaged by a magazine to do an article on American and English swearwords. After two or three attempts I had to give it up, for I found that neither branch of our ancient Frisian tongue could show anything worthy of serious consideration. The antinomians of England stick to two or three banal obscenities, one of which, *bloody*, is obscene only formally, and we Americans seldom get beyond variations of *hell* and *damn*. A single Neapolitan boatman could swear down the whole population of Anglo-Saxondom.

Bloody is perfectly innocuous in the United States, and it may be innocuous in England also on some near tomorrow—or even more disreputable than it is today. There is no predicting the social career of words. Dr. Leonard Bloomfield says that even “our word *whore*, cognate with the Latin *carus* (dear), must have been at one time a polite substitute for some term now lost.” Prophecy fails just as dismally when propriety does not come into question. Shakespeare’s numerous attempts to introduce new words, some of them his own inventions and others borrowed from the slang of the Bank-side, failed almost as often as they succeeded. He found ready takers for *courtship*, *lonely*, *sportive*, *multitudinous*, *hubbub* and *bump*, but his audiences would have none of *definement*, in the sense of description, or of *citizen* as an adjective, and both seem strange and uncouth to us today, though all the others are as familiar and as decorous as *cat* or *rat*. When John Marston used *strenuous* in 1599 it was attacked by Ben Jonson as barbarous, but a dozen years later it had got into Chapman’s Homer, and by 1670 it was being used by Milton. It remained perfectly respectable until 1900, when Theodore Roosevelt announced the Strenuous Life. Both the idea and the term struck the American fancy, and in a little while the latter passed into slang, and was worn so threadbare that all persons of careful speech sickened of it. To this

day it carries a faintly ridiculous connotation, and is seldom used seriously. But by 1975 it may be restored to the dignity of *psychopath* or *homooousian*. No one can say yes with any confidence, and no one can say no. "Even the greatest purist," observes Robert Lynd, "does not object to the inclusion of *bogus* in a literary English vocabulary, though a hundred years ago it was an American slang word meaning an apparatus for coining false money. *Carpet-bagger* and *bunkum* are other American slang words that have naturalized themselves in English speech, and *mob* is an example of English slang that was once as vulgar as *photo*."

Three Americanisms borrowed by English to one Britishism come into American! The true score, I suspect, is even more favorable to the Yankee as word-maker. Down to 1820, according to Sir William Craigie, the trans-Atlantic trade in neologisms ran mainly westward, but then it began to shift, and today it is very heavily eastward. It would be difficult to recall a dozen British inventions that have entered the common American vocabulary since the World War, but the number of Americanisms taken into English must run to hundreds, and perhaps even to thousands. The American movie and talkie, of course, have been responsible for the introduction of many of them, but there is something beyond that, and something more fundamental. They are adopted in England simply because England has nothing to offer in competition with them—that is, nothing so apt or pungent, nothing so good. His Lordship of Guildford did not apply *speed-cop* to that *mobile policeman* as a voluntary act of subversion, born of a desire to shock and insult the realm; he let it slip for the single reason that it was an irresistibly apposite and satisfying term. And so with all the other Americanisms that challenge and consume their British congeners. They win fairly on palpable points and by every rule of the game. Confronted by the same novelty, whether in object or in situation, the Americans always manage to fetch up a name for it that not only describes it but also illuminates it, whereas the English, since the Elizabethan stimulant oozed out of them, have been content merely to catalogue it. There was a brilliant exemplification of the two approaches in the early days of railways. The English, having to name the wedge-shaped fender that was put in front of the first locomotives, called it a *plough*, which was almost exactly what it was, but the Americans gave it the bold and racy appellation of *cowcatcher*. For the casting which guides the wheels from one rail to another the English coined the depressingly obvious name of *crossing-plate*; the Americans, setting their imaginations free, called it a *frog*. The same sharp contrast appears every time there is a call for a new word today. The American *movie* is obviously much better than the English *cinema*; it is even better English. So is *radio* better than *wireless*, though it may be Latin, and *job-holder* better than *public servant*, though it is surely literal enough, and *shock absorber* vastly better than *anti-bounce clip*, and *highball* than *whisky and soda*, and *bouncer* than *chucker-out*, and *chain store* than *multiple shop*, and *string bean* than *French bean*, and *union suit* than *combination*. Confronting the immensely American *rubberneck*, Dr. J. Y. T. Greig of Newcastle could only exclaim

"one of the best words ever coined!" And in the face of *lounge lizard*, Horace Annesley Vachell fell silent like Sir Isaac Newton on the seashore, overwhelmed by the solemn grandeur of the linguistic universe.

One finds in current American all the characters and tendencies that marked the rich English of Shakespeare's time—an eager borrowing of neologisms from other languages, a bold and often very ingenious use of metaphor, and a fine disdain of the barricades separating the parts of speech. The making of new words is not carried on only, or even principally, to fill gaps in the vocabulary; indeed, one may well agree with Captain Hall that "there are words enough already." It is carried on because there survives in the American something that seems to have faded out of the Englishman: an innocent joy in word-making for its own sake, a voluptuous delight in the vigor and elasticity of the language. The search for the *mot juste* is an enterprise that is altogether too pedantic for him; he much prefers to solve his problem by non-Euclidian devices. *Hoosegow* was certainly not necessary when it appeared, for we already had a large repertory of synonyms for *jail*. But when the word precipitated itself from the Spanish *juzgado* somewhere along the Rio Grande it won quick currency, and in a little while it was on the march through the country, and soon or late, I suppose, it will produce its inevitable clipped forms, *hoose* and *gow*, and its attendant adjective and verb. *Corral*, which entered by the same route in the Forties of the last century, had hatched a verb before the Civil War, and that verb, according to Webster's New International (1934), now has four separate and distinct meanings. *Bummer*, coming in from the German, is now clipped to *bum*, and is not only noun, verb, and adjective but also adverb. *Buncombe*, borrowed by the English as *bunkum*, has bred *bunco* and *bunk* at home, both of which rove the parts of speech in a loose and easy way, and the last of which has issue in the harsh verb *to debunk*, still under heavy fire in England.

The impact of such lawless novelties upon the more staid English of the motherland is terrific. The more they are denounced as heathen and outlandish, the quicker they get into circulation. Nor do they prosper only on the level of the vulgate, and among careless speakers. There are constant complaints in the English newspapers about their appearance in the parliamentary debates, and even in discourses from the sacred desk, and they begin to show themselves also in *belles-lettres*, despite the English dislike of new ways of writing. Their progress, in fact, is so widespread and so insidious that they often pop up in the diatribes that revile them; the Englishman, conquered at last, can no longer protest against Americanisms without using them. Moreover, they are now supported actively by a definitely pro-American party of writers and scholars, and though it is still small in numbers, at least compared to the patriot band, it shows some distinguished names. The late Robert Bridges, Poet Laureate, was an active member of it, and among its other adherents are Wyndham Lewis, Edward Shanks, Richard Aldington, and Sir John Foster Fraser. Sir William Craigie, perhaps the first of living lexicographers, is so greatly interested in the American form of English that he has

spent the years since 1925 in a scientific examination of it, and will presently begin the publication of an elaborate dictionary. If only because of the greater weight of the population behind it, it seems destined to usurp the natural leadership of British English, and to determine the general course of the language hereafter. But its chief advantage in this struggle is really not the numerical one, but the fact that its daring experiments and iconoclasms lie in the grand tradition of English, and are signs of its incurable normalcy and abounding vigor.

How far it will move away from the theorizing of grammarians and the policing of schoolmarms remains to be seen. They still make valiant efforts to curb its wayward spirit, but with gradually diminishing success. When, a few years ago, the late Sterling A. Leonard of the University of Wisconsin submitted a long series of their admonitions to a committee of educated Americans, including many philologists, he found that opinion was against them on that high level almost as decidedly as it was on lower ones. His judges favored scores of forms that the school grammars and popular handbooks of usage still condemn. Since then a more direct attack upon the conservative position has been made by Dr. Robert C. Pooley of the same university. He shows that some of the rules laid down with most assurance by pedants have no support in either history or logic, and are constantly violated by writers of unquestionable authority. There have even been rumblings of revolt in the conservative camp. The late George Philip Krapp of Columbia, who was surely anything but a radical, was of the opinion that English would undergo profound changes in the United States, and that many of them would be of such a character that its very grammatical structure would be shaken. Dr. George O. Curme of Northwestern University is another eminent grammarian who warns his colleagues that the rules they cherish have no genuine authority, and must be overhauled from time to time. Once they steel themselves to that sacrifice of their professional dignity, he says, "it will give a thrill to English-speaking students to discover that the English language does not belong to the schoolteacher but belongs to them, and that its future destiny will soon rest entirely in their hands."

Dr. Curme is always careful to think and speak of American as no more than a variation of English. But it must be obvious that, in late years, the tail has begun a vigorous wagging of the dog. "The facts that we ought to realize," says Edward Shanks to his fellow Britons, "and that we ignore when we talk loftily about Americanisms, are that America is making a formidable contribution to the development of our language, and that all our attempts to reject that contribution will in the long run be vain."

3. *Values*

STEPHEN VINCENT BENET (1898-1943) is particularly successful in his use of both realistic and imaginative material inherent in the background of American life. A member of a well-known literary family which includes a brother, William Rose, and a sister, Laura, he spent his boyhood in California, was reared at various army posts, and finally acquired three degrees from Yale. From a first volume of dramatic monologues written when he was seventeen, Benet went on to build a secure reputation for the writing of articles, short stories, and poems; the press notices of his untimely death indicated his high position in American letters. His epic attempt to realize the national significance of the Civil War in the long narrative poem *John Brown's Body*; his short story "The Devil and Daniel Webster"—later made into a moving picture; and *Selected Verse* (1942) are subjects for investigation by the college freshman who is beginning to build a background in modern American literature. His gaily illustrated volume for children, *A Book of Americans* (1933), which was written in collaboration with his wife, Rosemary, is by no means altogether superficial in its interpretation of American history.

THE POWER OF THE WRITTEN WORD

THE TITLE of this discussion—the power of the written word—may seem a little pretentious. I do not mean it in that way. Words happen to be our way of getting to know one another; that is all. Words—and the use and recording of words—are one of the few things that justifiably distinguish us from the animals. I have known cats with an interesting and extensive vocabulary—very possibly a learned one, for all that I could discern—but what they had to say perished with the saying of it. It is only the human race, as far as one can know, that is able to record its own past. In our brief life, we seem to have a passionate desire to put down what we saw and felt and knew—as it was, as it appeared to us—so that later people can know what sort of world we lived in and how we felt about it. It is that impulse which has made all writers write, from the first poet to the latest novelist. And it seems to be built into the human race.

Why do we do it? There are many reasons. The written word—the word set down—is not only a sword and a trumpet for the present but a link which binds us to all humanity. When we lose touch with the great words of the

"The Power of the Written Word," from *The Yale Review*. Copyright Yale University Press.

past—when they seem meaningless to us and we can make no new good words for our own day—then history changes. “No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less; . . . any man’s death diminishes me because I am involved in Mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee.”

The words I have just quoted were written by the great poet and great preacher John Donne in the seventeenth century. They appear, more than three hundred years later, on a flyleaf of the finest novel of 1940—and so apposite are they both to the theme of that novel and to our own times that they might have been written yesterday. Yes, words do have power, and live on.

Not only do they live on, but, with time and change, they sometimes gather an importance not dreamed of by their first makers. Let me take a rather simple sentence—a fairly banal one—such a sentence as “I am a citizen of the United States.” Now the actual fact stated there is a fact that most of us take for granted. We are used to it—so used that we don’t talk of it. You would as soon think of beginning a conversation with the blunt remark, “I am a mammal.” And yet, what I say in that particular sentence—“I am a citizen of the United States”—has rather more meanings than appear on the surface. For if I am a citizen, I am not a slave—and if I am a citizen, I need not be a lord. I have a state to which I owe certain responsibilities—and which, at the very least, owes certain responsibilities to me. That may not seem very much, but it has taken a good many centuries to establish that much. Neither baron nor serf of the Middle Ages knew it. What I say in that one word “citizen” represents a dream in men’s minds—a dream as old as the city-states of Greece, as new as last week’s election. That dream has been trampled upon, wiped out for dark ages of history—and recurred and recurred again, like the grass growing back after drought. To me, it is an essential dream. And yet part of it is there in one word.

Let us take some of the rest of the sentence—the mere words “United States.” Well, of course, we know what the United States means—we know it so well that we do not even have to think about it. And yet do we? For it took five years of active revolution to make the one word, “States”—twelve years of confederation and argument and, later on, four years of Civil War to make the word “United” an effective word. When you say those particular words—United States—you are not just talking of geography or even of a flag. You are talking of an idea in action—an idea as strong, as deeply rooted as any that has moved the minds of men—an idea that has been served, at one time or another, with singular devotion. I agree that we do not often think of it in that particular way. And yet it is there, in the words. And without the words, and the thought behind the words, it would not be there.

It is well to be thoughtful, then, when we use words. For sometimes the words that we write down are going to go on in ways that we did not expect and of which we could have no foreknowledge. A few men, gathered together on a crowded ship, set down and signed the Mayflower Compact—“to combine ourselves together in a civil body politick . . . for our better ordering . . .

and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws . . . as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony."

The historians will tell us, and quite correctly, that this particular document was an emergency measure for a particular case. It did not mean that the men who signed it wanted either a republic or a democracy, as we conceive of them, on these shores. It did not mean free speech—it did not mean religious tolerance. It merely meant that those few men wanted some sort of workable government once they got ashore. And yet once the thing is written down, it is written down and the men who come after remember it and put their own meanings to it. Once you have said "just and equal laws . . . for the general good," you have planted the seed for an unexpected harvest. As Sandburg says—be careful how you use proud words.

Be careful and yet be bold—for it is the bold words and the direct ones that live—and neither a nation nor an art can endure for long in a state of continuous apology. We have had bold words in the past—we shall have them again. There were very bold words in our Declaration of Independence—bold and novel words in the Constitution. We do not recognize their boldness because we have for so long enjoyed their benefits. And yet certain of these phrases have become part of the unconscious stream of our minds—the stream that lies at the back of all thought. The boldness is still in them, whenever we wish to rediscover it.

I am not saying, of course, that words will do it all. Any writer knows better than that. If at times he is proud of his craft, at other times he is humble about it. For he knows as well as anyone how words can be distorted, defaced, and misconstrued. And then, he is very fallible. He spends a good deal of time creating, as he thinks, a thing of beauty—and discovers, to his annoyance, when he has created it that it has six legs and four ears. He may spend a good deal of time trying to describe a certain section of life honestly and discover that, in the opinion of eminent persons, he has tried to corrupt the public morals. Now, it is really very difficult for a writer to corrupt the public morals all by himself—even with the best will in the world, he has to have considerable help from his constituency. And, what is worse, such a charge is apt to flatter the writer's vanity, and that isn't very good for him either.

No—words will not do it all—and the writer knows that. But sometimes they may take the step ahead, the step that means much to today and even more to tomorrow. The stone is thrown into the water and the ripples spread to far shores. In a troubled time—and ours is a troubled one indeed—it is easy to lose heart, to give in, to think there is no solution for the difficulties that perplex us. And yet, out of troubled times, the great artists have always looked forward. The greatest writers have shown what human life is—they have also shown what human life may be. Through their work runs continual wonder and continual questioning. Yet through the long roll of time, few of them have praised tyranny; most have denounced injustice; few have hated man.

I think it will continue to be so. And it must be so indeed. We have seen, in the last few years, a dark wave rise from the past to engulf free nations—

we have seen a tyranny set out to bind the minds of men such as has not bound the minds of men for many ages. Where that tyranny has passed, art has ceased. And yet so fearful is that tyranny of the mere power of words that it does not—and dares not—allow its subjects to listen to or read the words and the books of freedom. Perhaps that one single fact may show as well as anything the power of words.

It remains for those of us who are free, and who mean to stay free, to consider what words we shall say and how we shall say them. For those of us who are interested in the arts know very well, by now, for whom the bell tolls. We have heard it toll for men of genius who had no crime but their genius. We have talked to distinguished colleagues who have been hunted from nation to nation because they refused to abandon that freedom of thought and expression which is the creative birthright of every artist. We have seen this happen in our time. I do not see how it can leave us untouched, unaffected and at ease.

I do not mean that we should all immediately begin to propagandize, or all suddenly join in the singing of a medley of patriotic airs. It is not quite so simple a problem as that. I wish it were. It is more a question of thinking certain things through. My own generation of writers has recently been the target of criticism from a number of angles. That criticism has its justifications. We were not wiser than the statesmen or more foreseeing than the prophets. We moved with the mood of our time. Yet we did try to tell the truth about our time as we saw it—and that I do not regret.

To the charge of disillusion, we may perhaps plead guilty. We wanted to clear the ground, and clear it of bunk and cant. We wanted to enlarge the scope of fiction so that it could deal with all sides of life, not just carefully selected sectors. We wanted to experiment in new ways of saying things—new ways of breaking ground. Any generation that tries to do these things is apt to destroy certain illusions. And yet, in so doing, we were neither singular nor alone.

For two moods have been in the mind of America from the very first. From the first discoverers, what are "these loathly and savage woods" to one man become "these delicious prospects" to another. "The face of nature was a weather-beaten face" to the Pilgrims—but "We sat down and drank our first New England water with as much delight as ever we drank drink." It is this double mood of enthusiasm and self-criticism that has made the American mind. It shows in the folk songs of the people. For, in the march west, you might be singing, "O'er the hills in legions, boys . . . Freedom's bright star"; but you might equally well be singing, "Hurrah for Greer County, the land of the free,/ The land of the grasshopper, bedbug and flea,/ I'll sing of its praise, I'll tell of its fame,/ While starving to death on my government claim." And the double edge shows in the work of Whitman himself. The very spokesman of the democratic idea, the man who sang of democracy as few have sung of it, could yet write in "Democratic Vistas," "Never was there perhaps more hollowness at heart than at present here in the United States." Did that mean he was lying when he said one thing or lying when he said

the other? I do not think so. It meant that he had a concern with the Republic as most of our great writers have had a concern—a concern so passionate that it saw both faults and virtues. For both laughter and criticism are also part of democracy.

Am I wrong in saying that? Somehow, I do not think so. For democracy is often talked about but seldom defined. I will give a very old definition of it and it is this: "Democracy, which is a charming form of government, full of variety and disorder, and dispensing a sort of equality to equals and unequals alike." The definition happens to be Plato's—it might just as well be Mr. Dooley's. It is hundreds of years old and extremely contemporary. It would be entirely incomprehensible to Dr. Goebbels. He would not see how such a system could possibly work. And yet we have been able to work it here in this country for more than a century and a half.

I recommend it to your attention, because there is this to be said, and said in all seriousness. There are those who say or imply—and not only the official spokesmen for the totalitarian states—that democracy is dead and finished—that the future belongs to another and different concept of man and man's fate. I do not think they know the deep-rooted, inarticulate thing that democracy is in the lives and hearts of our people. I do not think they realize how swiftly, once that deep, inarticulate thing is really threatened, Americans can unite and put aside petty concerns and petty quarrels. I do not think they realize—quite—how well we know what we don't like. And yet that is something written across all our history—sometimes with a jest, sometimes with a deeper stain.

There are others—and this is to me a curious point of view—who suggest that because we have a good many automobiles as a nation and go to the movies now and then, we have therefore lost the manly virtues. Women, it appears, have feminized us and done us a great deal of damage—though the entire abolition of women has not yet been suggested by these critics. Yet that would be the logical step. We could all then be extremely manly, until, necessarily, we perished from the continent in one generation. I confess I cannot follow this particular line of reasoning. No nation has ever yet fallen because it treated its women like human beings. Nor is it necessary to be merely a hard-fisted brute in order to lead a nation to success. George Washington was a good many things, but, if he was merely a hard-fisted brute, the fact has escaped history. He and all the men of our own Revolution—all the great leaders—were civilized men. They had faults—they were human—but none of them, as far as we know, was in favor of abandoning all civilization because they were making a new country. On the contrary, it was upon the civilization they knew that they built their great new dream. I think it is to such men we should turn for example—not to those who have left the world nothing but a wasted land and the memory of a sword.

But we were considering writers, and the written word. And, after all, in this discussion that is our chief concern. I have tried to point out one or two things by the way. I have tried to point out that free words and free thinking are an essential part of our democratic process, and that disillusion, for a time,

does not mean everlasting despair. For I think there is a new tide—and a deep one—setting in American letters, a tide that has nothing to do with brag or false optimism, but a tide of deep conviction in certain essential things.

It must be so, for the issue has been joined. There is that abroad in the world which would destroy the freedom of the artist as it would destroy the free thinking of every man. And that issue must be met. For the war in the world today is a war of ideas and minds, as well as a war of armed forces.

We can call upon the great men, the great words of our own past—and that we should do—for in looking back at our past we can see at what a price, by what endurance and fortitude, the freedom we have inherited was bought. But that is only part of the task. We need new words also—and great ones—to match the present, to build for the future that must be. That is a great task indeed, and a very hard one. I do not know by whom these words will be made. They will not be made by the summer soldier or the sunshine patriot. And yet, if we believe in freedom, if we believe in life itself, they must be made.

Some have been made—in the last book of a man now dead, who attacked and cried out upon certain follies and shams as bitterly as any satirist and yet never lost belief in a greatness here. The voice speaks from the dead.

“I believe that we are lost here in America, but I believe we shall be found. . . . I think these forms are dying and must die just as I know that America and the people in it are deathless, undiscovered, immortal, and must live.

“I think the true discovery of America is before us. I think the true fulfillment of our spirit, of our people, of our mighty and immortal land is yet to come. I think the true discovery of our own democracy is still before us. And I think that all these things are as certain as the morning, as inevitable as noon. I think I speak for most men living when I say that our America is Here, is Now and beckons on before, and this assurance is not only our living hope but our dream to be accomplished.”

There is little I can add to these words of Thomas Wolfe. But that is our task—the living hope—the dream to be accomplished. It will not be accomplished easily—there are times when we may well think that it cannot be accomplished. There are always such times. But men have still gone forward. The day is troubled and the night full of voices. But if we are men we shall go forward. We shall still go forward to the hills.

ALBERT C. BARNES *was born (1872) in Philadelphia and educated at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received an M.D. degree in 1892. After study abroad, he returned to America and distinguished himself by developing the product known everywhere today as Argyrol. At 35 he found himself a millionaire. An interest in art, preserved since the days of his own youthful dabblings, now led to the establishing of the Barnes Foundation (1922)—an unusual philanthropy which provided free instruction in art. One of the first*

to recognize Cezanne, Renoir, and Picasso on this side of the Atlantic, Barnes established a worldwide reputation as a picture-buyer; a collection which included his first Picasso (cost: \$20) grew until it was evaluated at twenty million dollars. As collector, educator, author (The Art in Painting, 1925), Barnes has remained a prominent, even stormy, figure in the modern art world. His brushes with the University of Pennsylvania, Alexander Woolcott, and Bertrand Russell have made him a controversial figure in the public prints.

THE PROBLEM OF APPRECIATION

THE APPROACH to the problem of appreciation of art is made difficult by the unconscious habits and preconceptions which come to us from contact with a society which is but little interested in art. When other interests, such as those of a practical, sentimental, or moral nature, directly affect the esthetic interest, they are more likely than not to lead it astray, and the result is what may be called a confusion of values. Before trying to tell what the proper excellence in a painting is, we must make clear what it undeniably is *not*.

We miss the function of a painting if we look to it either for literal reproduction of subject-matter or for information of a documentary character. Mere imitation knows nothing of what is essential or characteristic, and documentary information always has an ulterior practical purpose. The camera records physical characteristics but can show nothing of what is beneath the surface. We ask of a work of art that it reveal to us the qualities in objects and situations which are significant, which have the power to move us esthetically. The artist must open our eyes to what unaided we could not see, and in order to do so he often needs to modify the familiar appearance of things and so make something which is, in the photographic sense, a bad likeness. What we ask of a painter is that, for example, in a landscape, he should catch the spirit of the scene; in a portrait, that he should discover what is essential or characteristic of the sitter. And these are obviously matters for judgment, not for photographic reproduction or documentary cataloguing.

By a common popular misconception, a painter is often expected to tell a story and is judged by his ability to make the story edifying or entertaining. This is not unnatural, since we are all ordinarily interested in real things because of the part they play in the story which is life. A work of art may, incidentally, tell a story, but error arises when we try to judge it by the narrative, or the moral pointed, instead of by the manner in which the artist has used his materials to produce a work of plastic art; when, in other words, a literary or moral value is mistaken for a plastic value.

Scarcely less destructive to genuine esthetic appreciation is the confusion of

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technical proficiency and artistic significance. Art is not only an expression of the artist's creative spirit, but also a kind of handicraft, a skill in employing a special technique. As in other handicrafts, some natural ability combined with instruction and practice may enable a person to handle a paintbrush; for one real artist there are hundreds of capable craftsmen in paint. It is not especially difficult to learn to recognize these technical devices; but it *is* difficult to recognize greatness in the effects obtained, to distinguish between professional competence and artistic genius. To look merely for professional competence in painting is academicism; it is to mistake the husk for the kernel, the shadow for the substance.

This error is really more serious than the novice's confusion of plastic art with narrative, sentiment, or photographic likeness, because the novice usually knows that he is such and is willing to learn, but the academician supposes himself to have learned already, and his mind is usually closed to the existence of anything but technique. With his eyes fixed upon the forms in which the living spirit of the past has embodied itself, he neglects the contemporary manifestations of that spirit, and often refuses to see or acknowledge them when they are pointed out to him. This is the reason why the most formidable enemy of new movements in art has always been, not the indifferent public, but the hostile academician. The public does not know that what he says applies only to technique, and not to art itself, and is correspondingly impressed. His motive need not, of course, be a conscious motive, and doubtless often is not. The mere fact of novelty, to one who has systematically addressed himself to the old and familiar things, is an irritation. It challenges precious habits, it threatens to overturn judgments with which the academician has identified himself, and which are in consequence dear to him. Pride joins hands with natural human inertia to oppose what is living in the interest of what is dead.

These errors and confusions arise because the ordinary observer has never really learned to see. He can recognize familiar objects, and the traits in them which would be of practical importance or sentimental concern in real things, but such recognition is in no proper sense perception or vision. It identifies the object only for the purpose of passing on to something else—uses, consequences, or private fancies which are no part of its intrinsic character. People often suppose that there is some secret about art, some password which must be divulged before they can discover its purpose or meaning. Absurd as such an idea is, it contains the important truth that seeing is something which must be learned, and not something which we all do as naturally as we breathe.

To make apparent in more detail the necessity for learning to see, we shall consider briefly the psychology of perception. The obvious instruments of perception are our sense-organs, by which impressions reach us from the external world. Such impressions, however, convey nothing to us unless we can interpret them, attach meaning to them, and interpretation is possible only to one who can bring the residue or record of past experience to bear on any particular situation with which he may be confronted. At any moment, the sum total of our actual sensations is a chaos: we are besieged by a medley of sights, sounds, feelings of warmth or coolness, of bodily comfort or discomfort, by far

the greater part of which have no connection with one another, and which could not possibly enter into any single experience. To be conscious of anything in particular, to retain our sanity, we must disregard nearly all of them, fixing our attention upon those which fit into some intelligible scheme or picture. But the connections which bring about intelligibility, which "make sense," have all been learned from past experience; this experience, retained in memory, is called forth as occasion for it arises. It then directs our attention to the significant aspects of the existing situation, to which it gives form and meaning—which, in a word, it enables us to perceive.

We have all had the experience of being in an unfamiliar situation, and finding ourselves unable to see more than a fraction of what is going on in it. The machinery in the hold of a steamship, the babel of voices when many people are speaking in a foreign language, the actions of those with whose manners, customs, and traditions we are unfamiliar—all these things are likely to appear to us as so much confusion and blur. Our difficulty is both that we do not see and that we do not comprehend. We see and hear something, and we can at least recognize wheels and shafts in the machinery, vowel sounds and consonant sounds in the words spoken, gestures and goings to and fro in the actions of the strange people. But we perceive vaguely, and much of what is happening escapes us altogether. It is only after, and by means of, understanding, that we can perceive with any precision, or notice more than a small part of the details in the scene before us. What we do see is hazy, scanty, and without perspective. We overlook the important and significant, and the odds and ends that come to our attention are jumbled together without rhyme or reason. Our senses, meanwhile, may be as acute as those of another who misses nothing in the picture; but we have not learned to use them, and he has.

The expression "to use our senses" is an indication that seeing or hearing is an active process, not a mere registration of impressions. After we have learned the purpose and the general plan of the machinery, we know how to look for the parts and the connections of which we were at first oblivious. When we have learned the vocabulary of a foreign language and know what to listen for, the finer shades of sound begin to stand out. We have acquired by experience a background which enables us to comprehend the machinery or the foreign language.

These are only outstanding examples of a process which is going on all the time. As long as we are really alive, we continue to grow by extending the application of our funded experience, perceiving things more and more precisely and discriminatingly, and at the same time investing them with constantly enriched meanings. The process is exemplified in every activity of life, from playing tennis or driving a motor car to practicing medicine or engaging in scientific research. As the system of meanings which makes up our minds is amplified and organized, our perceptions become correspondingly richer and more comprehensive. Vision and intelligence, in other words, are co-implicative, neither is possible without the other, and all growth involves their interaction.

This general principle furnishes us with the clue to esthetic education. We perceive only what we have learned to look for, both in life and in art. The artist, whether in paint, words, or musical tones, has embodied an experience in his work, and to appreciate his painting or poem or symphony, we must reconstruct his experience, so far as we are able, in ourselves. There is no essential difference in kind between the experience of the artist and that of the observer of his work, whatever may be the difference in their respective abilities. The experience of the artist arises out of a particular background, a set of interests and habits of perception, which, like the scientist's habits of thought, are potentially sharable by other individuals. They are only sharable, however, if one is willing to make the effort involved in acquiring a comparable set of habits and background. To see as the artist sees is an accomplishment to which there is no short cut, which cannot be acquired by any magic formula or trick; it requires not only the best energies of which we are capable, but a methodical direction of those energies, based upon scientific understanding of the meaning of art and its relation to human nature. The artist illuminates the objective world for us, exactly as does the scientist, different as the terms are in which he envisages it; art is as little a plaything, a matter of caprice or uncontrolled subjectivity, as is physics or chemistry. What has made the study of science valuable and fruitful is method, and without a corresponding method of learning to see, the study of art can lead only to futility. We must understand, in other words, what the distinctive aspects of reality are in which the artist is interested, how he organizes his work to reveal and organize those aspects, the means which he employs, and the kind of satisfaction which rewards his efforts when they are successful. Only in the light of such an understanding can anyone build up the habits of perception and background in himself which will give him admission to the world of esthetic experience.

WILLIAM JAMES (1842-1910), *brother of the novelist Henry James, was one of the most original and penetrating minds that this country has produced. By a series of steps that led through physiology and medicine, he approached philosophy from the viewpoint of a psychologist. The Will to Believe (1897), Pragmatism (1907), and The Meaning of Truth (1909) established him as one of the very few Americans who have made a definite and acknowledged contribution to the web of philosophy. John Dewey is perhaps the best known of his contemporary disciples. "The Moral Equivalent of War," written in his last year, is a striking example of the enduring quality of his thought.*

THE MORAL EQUIVALENT OF WAR

THE WAR against war is going to be no holiday excursion or camping party. The military feelings are too deeply grounded to abdicate their place among our ideals until better substitutes are offered than the glory and shame that come to nations as well as to individuals from the ups and downs of politics and the vicissitudes of trade. There is something highly paradoxical in the modern man's relation to war. Ask all our millions, north and south, whether they would vote now (were such a thing possible) to have our war for the Union expunged from history, and the record of a peaceful transition to the present time substituted for that of its marches and battles, and probably hardly a handful of eccentrics would say yes. Those ancestors, those efforts, those memories and legends, are the most ideal part of what we now own together, a sacred spiritual possession worth more than all the blood poured out. Yet ask those same people whether they would be willing in cold blood to start another civil war now to gain another similar possession, and not one man or woman would vote for the proposition. In modern eyes, precious though wars may be, they must not be waged solely for the sake of the ideal harvest. Only when forced upon one, only when an enemy's injustice leaves us no alternative, is a war now thought permissible.

It was not thus in ancient times. The earlier men were hunting men, and to hunt a neighboring tribe, kill the males, loot the village and possess the females, was the most profitable, as well as the most exciting, way of living. Thus were the more martial tribes selected, and in chiefs and peoples a pure pugnacity and love of glory came to mingle with the more fundamental appetite for plunder.

Modern war is so expensive that we feel trade to be a better avenue to plunder; but modern man inherits all the innate pugnacity and all the love of glory of his ancestors. Showing war's irrationality and horror is of no effect upon him. The horrors make the fascination. War is the *strong* life; it is life *in extremis*; war-taxes are the only ones men never hesitate to pay, as the budgets of all nations show us.

History is a bath of blood. The Iliad is one long recital of how Diomedes and Ajax, Sarpedon and Hector *killed*. No detail of the wounds they made is spared us, and the Greek mind fed upon the story. Greek history is a panorama of jingoism and imperialism—war for war's sake, all the citizens being warriors. It is horrible reading, because of the irrationality of it all—save for the purpose of making "history"—and the history is that of the utter ruin of civilization in intellectual respects perhaps the highest the earth has ever seen.

Those wars were purely piratical. Pride, gold, women, slaves, excitement, were their only motives. In the Peloponnesian war, for example, the Athenians

"The Moral Equivalent of War," from *Memories and Studies* by William James. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Longmans, Green & Co., Inc.

ask the inhabitants of Melos (the island where the "Venus of Milo" was found), hitherto neutral, to own their lordship. The envoys meet, and hold a debate which Thucydides gives in full, and which, for sweet reasonableness of form, would have satisfied Matthew Arnold. "The powerful exact what they can," said the Athenians, "and the weak grant what they must." When the Meleans say that sooner than be slaves they will appeal to the gods, the Athenians reply: "Of the gods we believe and of men we know that, by a law of their nature, wherever they can rule they will. This law was not made by us, and we are not the first to have acted upon it; we did but inherit it, and we know that you and all mankind, if you were as strong as we are, would do as we do. So much for the gods; we have told you why we expect to stand as high in their good opinion as you." Well, the Meleans still refused, and their town was taken. "The Athenians," Thucydides quietly says, "thereupon put to death all who were of military age and made slaves of the women and children. They then colonized the island, sending thither five hundred settlers of their own."

Alexander's career was piracy pure and simple, nothing but an orgy of power and plunder, made romantic by the character of the hero. There was no rational principle in it, and the moment he died his generals and governors attacked one another. The cruelty of those times is incredible. When Rome finally conquered Greece, Paulus Aemilius was told by the Roman Senate to reward his soldiers for their toil by "giving" them the old kingdom of Epirus. They sacked seventy cities and carried off a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants as slaves. How many they killed I know not; but in Etolia they killed all the senators, five hundred and fifty in number. Brutus was "the noblest Roman of them all," but to reanimate his soldiers on the eve of Philippi he similarly promises to give them the cities of Sparta and Thessalonica to ravage, if they win the fight.

Such was the gory nurse that trained societies to cohesiveness. We inherit the warlike type; and for most of the capacities of heroism that the human race is full of we have to thank this cruel history. Dead men tell no tales, and if there were any tribes of other type than this they have left no survivors. Our ancestors have bred pugnacity into our bone and marrow, and thousands of years of peace won't breed it out of us. The popular imagination fairly fattens on the thought of wars. Let public opinion once reach a certain fighting pitch, and no ruler can withstand it. In the Boer war both governments began with bluff but couldn't stay there, the military tension was too much for them. In 1898 our people had read the word "war" in letters three inches high for three months in every newspaper. The pliant politician McKinley was swept away by their eagerness, and our squalid war with Spain became a necessity.

At the present day, civilized opinion is a curious mental mixture. The military instincts and ideals are as strong as ever, but are confronted by reflective criticisms which sorely curb their ancient freedom. Innumerable writers are showing up the bestial side of military service. Pure loot and mastery seem no longer morally avowable motives, and pretexts must be found for attributing them solely to the enemy. England and we, our army and navy authorities re-

peat without ceasing, arm solely for "peace," Germany and Japan it is who are bent on loot and glory. "Peace" in military mouths today is a synonym for "war expected." The word has become a pure provocative, and no government wishing peace sincerely should allow it ever to be printed in a newspaper. Every up-to-date dictionary should say that "peace" and "war" mean the same thing, now *in posse*, now *in actu*. It may even reasonably be said that the intensely sharp competitive *preparation* for war by the nations *is the real war*, permanent, unceasing; and that the battles are only a sort of public verification of the mastery gained during the "peace"-interval.

It is plain that on this subject civilized man has developed a sort of double personality. If we take European nations, no legitimate interest of any one of them would seem to justify the tremendous destructions which a war to compass it would necessarily entail. It would seem as though common sense and reason ought to find a way to reach agreement in every conflict of honest interests. I myself think it our bounden duty to believe in such international rationality as possible. But, as things stand, I see how desperately hard it is to bring the peace-party and the war-party together, and I believe that the difficulty is due to certain deficiencies in the program of pacificism which set the militarist imagination strongly, and to a certain extent justifiably, against it. In the whole discussion both sides are on imaginative and sentimental ground. It is but one utopia against another, and everything one says must be abstract and hypothetical. Subject to this criticism and caution, I will try to characterize in abstract strokes the opposite imaginative forces, and point out what to my own very fallible mind seems the best utopian hypothesis, the most promising line of conciliation.

In my remarks, pacifist though I am, I will refuse to speak of the bestial side of the war-*régime* (already done justice to by many writers) and consider only the higher aspects of militaristic sentiment. Patriotism no one thinks discreditable; nor does anyone deny that war is the romance of history. But inordinate ambitions are the soul of every patriotism, and the possibility of violent death the soul of all romance. The militarily patriotic and romantic-minded everywhere, and especially the professional military class, refuse to admit for a moment that war may be a transitory phenomenon in social evolution. The notion of a sheep's paradise like that revolts, they say, our higher imagination. Where then would be the steeps of life? If war had ever stopped, we should have to re-invent it, on this view, to redeem life from flat degeneration.

Reflective apologists for war at the present day all take it religiously. It is a sort of sacrament. Its profits are to the vanquished as well as to the victor; and quite apart from any question of profit, it is an absolute good, we are told, for it is human nature at its highest dynamic. Its "horrors" are a cheap price to pay for rescue from the only alternative supposed, of a world of clerks and teachers, of co-education and zoophily, of "consumer's leagues" and "associated charities," of industrialism unlimited, and feminism unabashed. No scorn, no hardness, no valor any more! Fie upon such a cattleyard of a planet!

So far as the central essence of this feeling goes, no healthy-minded person,

it seems to me, can help to some degree partaking of it. Militarism is the great preserver of our ideals of hardihood, and human life with no use for hardihood would be contemptible. Without risks or prizes for the darer, history would be insipid indeed; and there is a type of military character which everyone feels that the race should never cease to breed, for everyone is sensitive to its superiority. The duty is incumbent on mankind, of keeping military characters in stock—of keeping them, if not for use, then as ends in themselves and as pure pieces of perfection,—so that Roosevelt's weaklings and mollicoddles may not end by making everything else disappear from the face of nature.

This natural sort of feeling forms, I think, the innermost soul of army-writings. Without any exception known to me, militarist authors take a highly mystical view of their subject, and regard war as a biological or sociological necessity, uncontrolled by ordinary psychological checks and motives. When the time of development is ripe the war must come, reason or no reason, for the justifications pleaded are invariably fictitious. War is, in short, a permanent human *obligation*. General Homer Lea, in his recent book *The Valor of Ignorance*, plants himself squarely on this ground. Readiness for war is for him the essence of nationality, and ability in it the supreme measure of the health of nations.

Nations, General Lea says, are never stationary—they must necessarily expand or shrink, according to their vitality or decrepitude. Japan now is culminating; and by the fatal law in question it is impossible that her statesmen should not long since have entered, with extraordinary foresight, upon a vast policy of conquest—the game in which the first moves were her wars with China and Russia and her treaty with England, and of which the final objective is the capture of the Philippines, the Hawaiian Islands, Alaska, and the whole of our coast west of the Sierra Passes. This will give Japan what her ineluctable vocation as a state absolutely forces her to claim, the possession of the entire Pacific Ocean; and to oppose these deep designs we Americans have, according to our author, nothing but our conceit, our ignorance, our commercialism, our corruption, and our feminism. General Lea makes a minute technical comparison of the military strength which we at present could oppose to the strength of Japan, and concludes that the islands, Alaska, Oregon, and Southern California, would fall almost without resistance, that San Francisco must surrender in a fortnight to a Japanese investment, that in three or four months the war would be over, and our republic, unable to regain what it had heedlessly neglected to protect sufficiently, would then “disintegrate,” until perhaps some Caesar should arise to weld us again into a nation.

A dismal forecast indeed! Yet not unplausible, if the mentality of Japan's statesmen be of the Caesarian type of which history shows so many examples, and which is all that General Lea seems able to imagine. But there is no reason to think that women can no longer be the mothers of Napoleonic or Alexandrian characters; and if these come in Japan and find their opportunity, just such surprises as *The Valor of Ignorance* paints may lurk in ambush for us. Ignorant as we still are of the innermost recesses of Japanese mentality, we may be foolhardy to disregard such possibilities.

Other militarists are more complex and more moral in their considerations. The *Philosophie des Kriegeres*, by S. R. Steinmetz, is a good example. War, according to this author, is an ordeal instituted by God, who weighs the nations in its balance. It is the essential form of the State, and the only function in which peoples can employ all their powers at once and convergently. No victory is possible save as the resultant of a totality of virtues, no defeat for which some vice or weakness is not responsible. Fidelity, cohesiveness, tenacity, heroism, conscience, education, inventiveness, economy, wealth, physical health and vigor—there isn't a moral or intellectual point of superiority that doesn't tell, when God holds his assizes and hurls the peoples upon one another. *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*; and Dr. Steinmetz does not believe that in the long run chance and luck play any part in apportioning the issues.

The virtues that prevail, it must be noted, are virtues anyhow, superiorities that count in peaceful as well as in military competition; but the strain on them, being infinitely intenser in the latter case, makes war infinitely more searching as a trial. No ordeal is comparable to its winnowings. Its dread hammer is the welder of men into cohesive states, and nowhere but in such states can human nature adequately develop its capacity. The only alternative is "degeneration."

Dr. Steinmetz is a conscientious thinker, and his book, short as it is, takes much into account. Its upshot can, it seems to me, be summed up in Simon Patten's word, that mankind was nursed in pain and fear, and that the transition to a "pleasure-economy" may be fatal to a being wielding no powers of defence against its disintegrative influences. If we speak of the *fear of emancipation from the fear-régime*, we put the whole situation into a single phrase; fear regarding ourselves now taking the place of the ancient fear of the enemy.

Turn the fear over as I will in my mind, it all seems to lead back to two unwillingnesses of the imagination, one esthetic, and the other moral; unwillingness, first to envisage a future in which army-life, with its many elements of charm, shall be forever impossible, and in which the destinies of peoples shall nevermore be decided quickly, thrillingly, and tragically, by force, but only gradually and insipidly by "evolution"; and, secondly, unwillingness to see the supreme theater of human strenuousness closed, and the splendid military aptitudes of men doomed to keep always in a state of latency and never show themselves in action. These insistent unwillingnesses, no less than other esthetic and ethical insistentencies, have, it seems to me, to be listened to and respected. One cannot meet them effectively by mere counter-insistency on war's expensiveness and horror. The horror makes the thrill; and when the question is of getting the extremest and supremest out of human nature, talk of expense sounds ignominious. The weakness of so much merely negative criticism is evident—pacifism makes no converts from the military party. The military party denies neither the bestiality nor the horror, nor the expense; it only says that these things tell but half the story. It only says that war is *worth* them; that, taking human nature as a whole, its wars are its

best protection against its weaker and more cowardly self, and that mankind cannot *afford* to adopt a peace-economy.

Pacifists ought to enter more deeply into the esthetical and ethical point of view of their opponents. Do that first in any controversy, says J. J. Chapman, *then move the point*, and your opponent will follow. So long as antimilitarists propose no substitute for war's disciplinary function, no *moral equivalent* of war, analogous, as one might say, to the mechanical equivalent of heat, so long they fail to realize the full inwardness of the situation. And as a rule they do fail. The duties, penalties, and sanctions pictured in the utopias they paint are all too weak and tame to touch the military-minded. Tolstoi's pacificism is the only exception to this rule, for it is profoundly pessimistic as regards all this world's values, and makes the fear of the Lord furnish the moral spur provided elsewhere by the fear of the enemy. But our socialistic peace-advocates all believe absolutely in this world's values; and instead of the fear of the Lord and the fear of the enemy, the only fear they reckon with is the fear of poverty if one be lazy. This weakness pervades all the socialistic literature with which I am acquainted. Even in Lowes Dickinson's exquisite dialogue, high wages and short hours are the only forces invoked for overcoming man's distaste for repulsive kinds of labor. Meanwhile men at large still live as they always have lived, under a pain-and-fear economy—for those of us who live in an ease-economy are but an island in the stormy ocean—and the whole atmosphere of present-day utopian literature tastes mawkish and dishwatery to people who still keep a sense for life's more bitter flavors. It suggests, in truth, ubiquitous inferiority.

Inferiority is always with us, and merciless scorn of it is the keynote of the military temper. "Dogs, would you live forever?" shouted Frederick the Great. "Yes," say our utopians, "let us live forever, and raise our level gradually." The best thing about our "inferiors" today is that they are as tough as nails, and physically and morally almost as insensitive. Utopianism would see them soft and squeamish, while militarism would keep their callousness, but transfigure it into a meritorious characteristic, needed by "the service," and redeemed by that from the suspicion of inferiority. All the qualities of a man acquire dignity when he knows that the service of the collectivity that owns him needs them. If proud of the collectivity, his own pride rises in proportion. No collectivity is like an army for nourishing such pride; but it has to be confessed that the only sentiment which the image of pacific cosmopolitan industrialism is capable of arousing in countless worthy breasts is shame at the idea of belonging to *such* a collectivity. It is obvious that the United States of America as they exist today impress a mind like General Lea's as so much human blubber. Where is the sharpness and precipitousness, the contempt for life, whether one's own, or another's? Where is the savage "yes" and "no," the unconditional duty? Where is the conscription? Where is the blood-tax? Where is anything that one feels honored by belonging to?

Having said thus much in preparation, I will now confess my own utopia. I devoutly believe in the reign of peace and in the gradual advent of some sort of a socialistic equilibrium. The fatalistic view of the war-function is to

me nonsense, for I know that war-making is due to definite motives and subject to prudential checks and reasonable criticisms, just like any other form of enterprise. And when whole nations are the armies, and the science of destruction vies in intellectual refinement with the sciences of production, I see that war becomes absurd and impossible from its own monstrosity. Extravagant ambitions will have to be replaced by reasonable claims, and nations must make common cause against them. I see no reason why all this should not apply to yellow as well as to white countries, and I look forward to a future when acts of war shall be formally outlawed as between civilized peoples.

All these beliefs of mine put me squarely into the antimilitarist party. But I do not believe that peace either ought to be or will be permanent on this globe, unless the states pacifically organized preserve some of the old elements of army-discipline. A permanently successful peace-economy cannot be a simple pleasure-economy. In the more or less socialistic future towards which mankind seems drifting we must still subject ourselves collectively to those severities which answer to our real position upon this only partly hospitable globe. We must make new energies and hardihood continue the manliness to which the military mind so faithfully clings. Martial virtues must be the enduring cement; intrepidity, contempt of softness, surrender of private interest, obedience to command, must still remain the rock upon which states are built—unless, indeed, we wish for dangerous reactions against commonwealths fit only for contempt, and liable to invite attack whenever a center of crystallization for military-minded enterprise gets formed anywhere in their neighborhood.

The war-party is assuredly right in affirming and reaffirming that the martial virtues, although originally gained by the race through war, are absolute and permanent human goods. Patriotic pride and ambition in their military form are, after all, only specifications of a more general competitive passion. They are its first form, but that is no reason for supposing them to be its last form. Men now are proud of belonging to a conquering nation, and without a murmur they lay down their persons and their wealth, if by so doing they may fend off subjection. But who can be sure that *other aspects of one's country* may not, with time and education and suggestion enough, come to be regarded with similarly effective feelings of pride and shame? Why should men not some day feel that it is worth a blood-tax to belong to a collectivity superior in *any* ideal respect? Why should they not blush with indignant shame if the community that owns them is vile in any way whatsoever? Individuals, daily more numerous, now feel this civic passion. It is only a question of blowing on the spark till the whole population gets incandescent, and on the ruins of the old morals of military honor, a stable system of morals of civic honor builds itself up. What the whole community comes to believe in grasps the individual as in a vise. The war-function has grasped us so far; but constructive interests may some day seem no less imperative, and impose on the individual a hardly lighter burden.

Let me illustrate my idea more concretely. There is nothing to make one indignant in the mere fact that life is hard, that men should toil and suffer pain. The planetary conditions once for all are such, and we can stand it. But

that so many men, by mere accidents of birth and opportunity, should have a life of *nothing else* but toil and pain and hardness and inferiority imposed upon them, should have *no* vacation, while others natively no more deserving never get any taste of this campaigning life at all,—*this* is capable of arousing indignation in reflective minds. It may end by seeming shameful to all of us that some of us have nothing but campaigning, and others nothing but unmanly ease. If now—and this is my idea—there were, instead of military conscription a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against *Nature*, the injustice would tend to be evened out, and numerous other goods to the commonwealth would follow. The military ideals of hardihood and discipline would be wrought into the growing fiber of the people; no one would remain blind as the luxurious classes now are blind, to man's relations to the globe he lives on, and to the permanently sour and hard foundations of his higher life. To coal and iron mines, to freight trains, to fishing fleets in December, to dish-washing, clothes-washing, and window-washing, to road-building and tunnel-making, to foundries and stoke-holes, and to the frames of skyscrapers, would our gilded youths be drafted off, according to their choice, to get the childishness knocked out of them, and to come back into society with healthier sympathies and soberer ideas. They would have paid their blood-tax, done their own part in the immemorial human warfare against nature; they would tread the earth more proudly, the women would value them more highly, they would be better fathers and teachers of the following generation.

Such a conscription, with the state of public opinion that would have required it, and the many moral fruits it would bear, would preserve in the midst of a pacific civilization the manly virtues which the military party is so afraid of seeing disappear in peace. We should get toughness without callousness, authority with as little criminal cruelty as possible, and painful work done cheerily because the duty is temporary, and threatens not, as now, to degrade the whole remainder of one's life. I spoke of the "moral equivalent" of war. So far, war has been the only force that can discipline a whole community, and until an equivalent discipline is organized, I believe that war must have its way. But I have no serious doubt that the ordinary prides and shames of social man, once developed to a certain intensity, are capable of organizing such a moral equivalent as I have sketched, or some other just as effective for preserving manliness of type. It is but a question of time, of skillful propagandism, and of opinion-making men seizing historic opportunities.

The martial type of character can be bred without war. Strenuous honor and disinterestedness abound elsewhere. Priests and medical men are in a fashion educated to it, and we should all feel some degree of it imperative if we were conscious of our work as an obligatory service to the state. We should be *owned*, as soldiers are by the army, and our pride would rise accordingly. We could be poor, then, without humiliation, as army officers now are. The only thing needed henceforward is to inflame the civic temper as past history has inflamed the military temper. H. G. Wells, as usual, sees the center of the situ-

ation. "In many ways," he says, "military organization is the most peaceful of activities. When the contemporary man steps from the street of clamorous, insincere advertisement, push, adulteration, underselling, and intermittent employment into the barrack-yard, he steps on to a higher social plane, into an atmosphere of service and coöperation and of infinitely more honorable emulations. Here at least men are not flung out of employment to degenerate because there is no immediate work for them to do. They are fed and drilled and trained for better services. Here at least a man is supposed to win promotion by self-forgetfulness and not by self-seeking. And beside the feeble and irregular endowment of research by commercialism, its little short-sighted snatches at profit by innovation and scientific economy, see how remarkable is the steady and rapid development of method and appliances in naval and military affairs! Nothing is more striking than to compare the progress of civil conveniences which has been left almost entirely to the trader, to the progress in military apparatus during the last few decades. The house-appliances of today, for example, are little better than they were fifty years ago. A house of today is still almost as ill-ventilated, badly heated by wasteful fires, clumsily arranged and furnished as the house of 1858. Houses a couple of hundred years old are still satisfactory places of residence, so little have our standards risen. But the rifle or battleship of fifty years ago was beyond all comparison inferior to those we possess; in power, in speed, in convenience alike. No one has a use now for such superannuated things."

Wells adds that he thinks that the conceptions of order and discipline, the tradition of service and devotion, of physical fitness, unstinted exertion, and universal responsibility, which universal military duty is now teaching European nations, will remain a permanent acquisition, when the last ammunition has been used in the fireworks that celebrate the final peace. I believe as he does. It would be simply preposterous if the only force that could work ideals of honor and standards of efficiency into English or American natures should be the fear of being killed by the Germans or the Japanese. Great indeed is Fear; but it is not, as our military enthusiasts believe and try to make us believe, the only stimulus known for awakening the higher ranges of men's spiritual energy. The amount of alteration in public opinion which my utopia postulates is vastly less than the difference between the mentality of those black warriors who pursued Stanley's party on the Congo with their cannibal war-cry of "Meat! Meat!" and that of the "general-staff" of any civilized nation. History has seen the latter interval bridged over: the former one can be bridged over much more easily.

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A SOLDIER LOOKS AT THE CHURCH

TO THE question "What does the soldier think of the Church?" the only proper answer is "He doesn't." In the thinking of the average G.I. the Church of Jesus Christ shares a place with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Clay Pigeons. His complete and colossal indifference is merely a reflection of the mind of the man on any Main Street, for the soldier is simply a civilian in uniform and his mental outlook has not been radically altered by the entirely different environment in which he finds himself.

He is, in a sense, concerned with religion. In fact it is one of his favorite topics of conversation. To his long and lively discussions he brings an eager interest and an incredible ignorance. His faith is far greater than his knowledge. There are in truth few atheists in foxholes just as there are few atheists in factories. The average man has little inclination to doubt the fact of God, the efficacy of prayer, or the certainty of immortality. These fundamentals of religious faith he takes for granted; and the professional agnostic is as little regarded as any clergyman, which is to say that he is ignored completely.

The typical soldier, if such there is, has no quarrel with the Church. He is no more interested in closing the church doors than he is in entering them. With the natural courtesy of Americans he is respectful to clergymen even though they make him feel uncomfortable. Even the nostalgic and somewhat uneasy affection of a preceding generation for the Church of their fathers is not shared by a youth raised in a home untouched by anything more vital than an inherited concern with organized religion. When pressed by the Army to state a religious preference the soldier will vaguely assent to being classified, but many are not communicants and would be hard put to it to explain their preference. Nor is it possible to discover by inquiry any explanation for this indifference. The lack of interest is too complete to stimulate discussion among men who are ordinarily only too willing to discuss any subject under the sun. To most soldiers the Church is dead and weeds grow over her grave.

Perhaps they are right. Certainly there is little vitality in a Church which has so signally failed to impress itself on the consciousness, to say nothing of the conscience, of a generation. A Church which had succeeded in gaining the hostility of the world would be a Church Militant. A Church which had gained the allegiance of the world would be a Church Triumphant. But a

"A Soldier Looks at the Church." Reprinted from *Harper's Magazine*, October, 1944, by permission of the author.

Church which has the world's indifference is a Church Moribund. The tragedy is that organized religion has not even suffered the distinction of a dignified death. Rather it presents the pitiful and rather ridiculous spectacle of a superannuated actor who insists on playing his part long after the audience has left. It is a sacrilege indeed when the Body of Christ is either ignored completely or treated with amused condescension.

The irony of it all is that churchmen and especially clergymen are quite unaware that the world has passed them by. It is probable that the laity are more conscious of this, but with tender solicitude they seek to shelter their ministers from the facts of life. In this they have been notably successful. The average pastor may become perturbed by the failure of most of his membership to show any vital concern about the Church which carries their names on its roll, but he seems blissfully unaware of the fact that the vast majority of the community in most sections of our country are not even nominal members of any ecclesiastical organization. These are outside the pale of his narrow experience. It is distressing to see the perturbation of many Army chaplains thrown for the first time into intimate contact with the rank and file of Americans for whom the Church simply does not exist.

Even those clergymen who have been mercifully forced out of the cloistered seclusion of their protected parishes into the bewildering confusion of an unfamiliar world are inclined, after the manner of their kind, to refuse to face reality. They lay the blame for the all-too-apparent indifference on the unnatural conditions of Army life, though the fact is that there is a far greater interest evidenced in the Army chapel than in the home church. But the Church seems always to be making excuses, seeking to find the fault outside of itself. This is a vain and futile business. The time has come for self-examination and self-condemnation. We must realize that the fault is not in our world but in ourselves. We must awaken from our fool's paradise and discover the reasons for the world's indifference. Some of these are starkly apparent in the attitude of Army men.

Their attitude toward the chaplain is illuminating. In one's first approach to the men it is at once apparent that the soldier expects one to be concerned exclusively with his venial sins. The "good boys" among them will take pains to make it clear that they eschew liquor, gambling, prostitutes, and profanity, feeling that such righteousness will set the mind of the Padre completely at rest regarding their spiritual health. The "bad boys" will either seek to shock the simple-minded man of God by a recital of their peccadilloes or awkwardly make excuses for them. Both "good" and "bad" assume the Church's only interest to be with their petty sins or paltry virtues. The assumption is justified by the record. Small wonder the Church is ignored.

It is the function of the Church to convict the world of sin and call men to repentance, but what are the sins which are damning the world to hell in our time? Today fear clutches the heart of humanity as it dimly conceives of the awful horror threatening to destroy every vestige of Christian civilization and send us reeling back into barbarism. But while the world is on fire,

the Church fiddles. With irritating monotony we play over the same silly tune unheard above the roaring of the flames. We continue to condemn those evils of the flesh which are only secondary symptoms of a deep-seated disease which threatens the very life of humanity.

Is it any wonder that soldiers facing death in the grim reality of the greatest bloodletting in human history should be unconcerned at the prattle of the chaplains—and there are many—who lecture them on the evils of stud poker, profanity, and jungle juice? Most of the soldiers would not defend as good their language, appetites, or diversions, but all of them must feel that the evil which has brought them to this hour, threatening their lives and the life of the world, is not contained in these paltry sins. They know the awful necessity of war has made them wreckers and killers. They have been taught to shoot, stab, and throttle their enemies. They have been exiled from peaceful homes and the creative work they knew to live like rats in muddy holes. They feel instinctively that the physical and spiritual suffering of war in which they have shared must result from the sins of the world. They would like to know what these sins are. They would like to hear them condemned in themselves as well as others. They long to understand the reason for the cross on which they hang and that other Cross where goodness, justice, mercy, beauty, honor, and love are crucified. They desperately hope that the world may be saved; but how? And the Padre says, "Naughty, naughty for getting drunk."

Before God, what sort of preaching is that? Worse, I have heard a chaplain, God forgive him, preaching to men in the valley of the shadow of death the absolute necessity of baptism by total immersion! Is it any wonder that the soldier is only irritated by the pathetic pipings of such pitiful prophets? While Christ suffers on the Cross for the sins of the world we hurl our polemics at the soldiers shooting craps for His robe. And the tragedy is that the men expect nothing more from His disciples.

2

They expect nothing more partly because of their opinion of parsons. The soldiers see the chaplain as something less than a man who, set apart as he must be, knows nothing of life. Like the man in the street they imagine the clergy to be much more at home in the Ladies' Aid than in the world of men. It is a source of amazement to many to find their chaplain human. They are further astonished to discover that some chaplains have learned the facts of life. But underneath all this, their original conception holds. The Church is weakened by a leadership whose lack of sophistication is almost unbelievable.

From his youth up the average clergyman has been a person apart. Early dedicated to the "work of the Lord," he is nurtured for his vocation by doting parents and parsons. From the narrow atmosphere of a sectarian college he goes on to seminary and from there is sent, a young innocent, to a parish where his loyal flock make certain that he remains uncontaminated by any contact with the world. This is surely the worst possible preparation for a

man who should grapple with evil and deal on intimate terms with the all too sordid lives of men and women. Knowing more of homiletics than humanity, versed in theology but ignorant of the world and its affairs, he plods along in the ruts worn by his predecessors, doing faithfully the inconsequential work of the average parish priest. His church members neither expect nor want him to concern himself with the vexing problems of a world that has lost its way.

Even the crusade against war by the more enlightened churchmen which helped to redeem the futility of the prewar Church was rendered worse than useless by their failure to comprehend that war is more a consequence than a cause of evil. In attacking war the crusaders were attacking hell and not the sins which send men there. The voice of the Church should have been raised against the evils that breed wars. Our well-meaning but unrealistic pacifism served only to weaken the nation in its inevitable conflict; inevitable because the causes of war were not fearlessly faced, ruthlessly exposed, and sagaciously eliminated. You do not prevent wars by deploring them. Yellow fever is not eliminated by insisting that it is bad but by draining the swamps and destroying the mosquitoes. Even so with war.

Refusing to learn from experience, many Church leaders today are foolishly wasting their breath insisting that war is evil and condemning those who are taking part in it. Do they in the easy security of their sanctuaries imagine that it is necessary to convince soldiers that there is no good or glory in the bloody business in which they are engaged? Not the voice of the preacher but their cruel experience has taught them that. But understandably they resent the implication that they have sinned in doing the dirty job that had to be done. They do not enjoy being killers, these boys, and they would like from the Church a sympathetic understanding of the cruel necessity which has made them so.

More than that, they would like—and have the right to expect—that while the Church refuses, rightly, to glorify war it will glorify the motives that actuate men engaged in the conflict. God forgive us if we condemn these men as we did their fathers to the hell of disillusionment when they have finished their task. They are laying the gift of themselves upon the altar as a sacrifice to what they believe to be ideals worth dying for. If we make a mockery of their motives we shall destroy in them, as we did before, that idealism without which we cannot build the brave new world of the future. It is one thing to insist that the war of itself will not achieve democracy, security, peace, or liberty. It is another thing to say that the men who suffered and died were not really fighting to preserve these things. It is for us to assure them that the years which they gave were not worse than wasted and that their comrades did not die in vain. There is one good thing which war, the destroyer, creates, and that is the righteous purpose in the hearts of men to give themselves freely for what they conceive to be some higher good. Out of war's wastage let us seek to conserve this treasure. Let us use this spirit to empower our continued effort to achieve in peace what could not be achieved by war.

A disillusioned generation will hardly be enthusiastic about supporting a

program of world reconstruction based on ideals we have already taught them to decry. Let us rather direct our efforts toward making these men feel that the ideals for which they have risked their lives were not hokum but the very essence of reality and must be achieved in our world. Perhaps then the spirit engendered in war will fulfill its high purpose in peace.

Above all the Church must dedicate itself, both now and in the postwar world, to the high task of denouncing the evils which are the root cause of conflict. Just as certainly we must present to men the pattern of the Kingdom of God as the answer to man's desire for a better society—not as an impossible ideal to strive for but as a practical program to be achieved. The supreme task of the Church, however, is not preaching but practice.

3

We must first of all rid the Church itself of these evils. Denunciation of sins which we share will forever fail to convince men of our sincerity of purpose. It is the duty of the Church to be in the world a "colony of Heaven" where men may see worked out in practice the principles which, inculcated into the larger society, will mean its salvation. This is the harder but the better way.

We know, for example, that one of the sins of our age which has fostered conflict and war is the sin of pride and its attendant bigotry and intolerance. But the Church can neither convict men of this sin nor call them to repentance and the redeeming work of brotherhood until we have convinced the world that we ourselves are free from this great transgression. So far we have failed to do so. Until we do, men will rightly mock us for our hypocrisy.

Intolerance is heinous whether it parades in brown shirts or in white sheets, and the Church in America must labor long to free itself from the stigma of having fostered the unrighteous bigotry of the Ku Klux Klan. Racial conflict is threatening the world today as never before, and it will be one of the stupendous problems for our postwar world to grapple with. The subject races of mankind are stirring into articulate protest which must be heard if we are to have peace. This protest has been stimulated both by the racial intolerance of the Nazis and by the encouragement of minorities by the war aims of the Allies. The lines are forming between those who would enslave the weaker races and those who would grant to them equality of opportunity in a free world. The Church must make a stand. But what shall it profit us to talk of racial brotherhood while we deny it within our own communions? If we believe in brotherhood we must prove it by ending forever the inequalities within the Church.

Nor can a Church which is divided by religious intolerance and corrupted by religious bigotry establish in the hearts of men that spirit of understanding and love that will permit races and classes to live together in unity and peace. When has the Church shown fruits meet for repentance? Are not our divisions within the Body of Christ the scandal of Christendom in spite of all our ecumenical talk? Can we who are so disunited lead a world to unity? It is good to preach against narrow nationalism and paint the glories of a co-

operative society among nations, but it would be better to demonstrate that the Church is able to resolve its own differences and create its own unity. So long as we are not willing to make the sacrifices necessary to bring about co-operation between denominations we shall not be fit to lead the people into the Federation of Mankind. It is not necessary that we should abolish denominations any more than it is essential or desirable to eliminate nations; but it is imperative that we put an end to conflict and achieve co-operation between the several members of the Body of Christ.

Materialism is one of the disruptive philosophies of our modern world. The greed of men and nations has found its certain fruition in the devastation of war. Against this philosophy the Church is surely committed. But we are more than tainted with this same deadly spirit. How much of our concern has been with budgets and buildings, how little with fasting and prayer! The voice of well-heeled ecclesiastics preaching against rampant materialism to smugly comfortable congregations has a hollow sound. Constantly we urge our members to support some worthy cause with "their gifts and prayers" but it is usually all too evident which of the two we consider important. Men are rightly offended when they attend our so-called services of worship and find not a priest but a beggar in the sanctuary. The clank of coins is far too loud in our temples for men to hear the voice of God assuring us that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesses. The attitude of the Church is all too plainly indicated when one of our greatest ecclesiastical organizations supports fascism in a nation where its property is protected by the state and opposes it in a country where its holdings are confiscated.

A world that is concerned with the distress resulting from a criminal inequality in the distribution of goods will not look for leadership in economic reform from a Church where clergymen labor excessively in poor parishes for a pittance while their brethren in Christ enjoy the sinecure of privileged pastorates. Nor can we preach persuasively the necessity for a living wage while so many of our own ministers and church workers fail so dismally to receive adequate support. Until the Church has put into practice the basically Christian standard of "from every man according to his ability and to every man according to his need" we shall not be able to lead the world in a Christian solution of our economic problems.

Even so with social and political reformation in a world torn between the ideals of democracy and tyranny. The necessity that the Church shall stand for liberty is plain. Out of the Christian emphasis on the dignity and worth of every human personality was born the doctrine of democracy. We dare not be false to our own child. Rightly the most articulate foe of totalitarian tyranny in Europe has been the Church. Men seeking to strike off their shackles should always find a champion in the Church. Unhappily there are masses now in revolt who are firmly convinced that the Church is the friend of privilege and power. They have noted the record in Spain, Latin America, Italy, Austria, Russia, Poland, and other nations where pastors of the people have formed an unholy alliance with their plunderers. Even in our own country

there have been too few prophetic voices lifted from our pulpits in defense of the rights of man. We fool no one when we dodge our responsibility by asserting that the business of the Church is to preach the Gospel. The New Testament is no longer a forbidden book. Men may read it and the simplest among them cannot fail to understand the plain words of our Lord when He insisted that the essence of true religion is to do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

As we have insisted, however, the Church must do more than preach democracy. It must practice it. The revolt of our original Protestantism against religious authority was a part of, and the inspiration for, the political revolutions which followed the Reformation. But Protestantism in many of its branches has not kept the faith. In Christendom as a whole the vast majority of Church governments are autocracies which out-Hitler Hitler. This is true of all which cling tenaciously to the authoritarian government of an episcopal hierarchy. As the original Protestants clearly comprehended, the divine right of bishops is at one with the divine right of kings. It is a sad anachronism that even now such completely undemocratic Churches as ours should flourish in nations dedicated to the principles of political liberty. As a society within a society the Church should be an example of a functioning democracy. In many of our communions it is far from such.

The attitude of the Church toward women is a case in point. While against constant opposition women have been achieving legal and political equality they have consistently been denied ecclesiastical equality. In spite of the fact that both numerically and financially, and certainly spiritually, women are the chief support of our churches, there are few communions which accord them even the semblance of equality with the men of the congregations. The fact that most churchwomen accept this without murmur is not a justification for such a denial of the fundamental tenets of democracy.

The most pernicious form of tyranny in our world today is that exercised over the minds of men. This is the fundamental offense of the totalitarian state. This is the supreme denial of the dignity of human personality. This is the Nazis' unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost. Here too the Church itself has sinned. We have sought to shackle the minds of our adherents not only theologically but scientifically. The inquisition is perpetual. Who would have the temerity to suggest that either priests or people are permitted in most Christian churches to adventure boldly in search of ever new Truth which God has promised to reveal to mankind by His Holy Spirit? Nowhere outside of Nazidom can one equal the justifiable fear of all too many clergymen that by their preaching they may bring down upon themselves the swift and certain wrath of the self-appointed Gestapo which operates in every denomination. What a travesty on the perfect liberty which should exist in Christ! The hope of humanity lies in the untrammelled search for Truth. This alone can set men free. In this search the Church should lead the way. Only by swearing eternal enmity against every form of tyranny over the mind of man will

the Church be able to lead mankind in the unceasing struggle for freedom. Only as we allow the winds of freedom to blow unchecked in our own communions will men recognize our leadership in a democratic world.

If some chaplains in the Army have been able to overcome the deadly indifference of the soldier it is only because they have brought to them a religion that serves their present need and fulfills their future hopes. But our hold upon these men is tenuous. One day they are coming home. They will need the Church and the Church will need them; but it must be a revitalized Church. They and all men will be seeking leadership in the rebuilding of a wrecked society; that leadership must come from a Church which has given evidence by its own reformation that it is worthy to direct the reformation of mankind.

ROLLO WALTER BROWN *After teaching at Wabash, Carlton, and Harvard, Rollo Walter Brown (b. 1880)*

took the step that constitutes a temptation to many university professors. He folded his class-books and devoted himself to writing and lecturing. Some of the best-known results of this increased leisure for thinking and living have been The Creative Spirit (1925), Lonely Americans (1929), Toward Romance (1932), and a series of novels about life in Ohio, his native state. He is now at work on an autobiography. Anyone who has read very much of Emerson and Thoreau will be aware of an echo.

I AM A LUXURY

IT WAS a banker who broke the news to me. He is as white a banker as anybody need require, and he sought to make my ordeal as nearly painless as possible. "But," he said, "sometimes we have to face things just as they are—'realistically,' you know—and when we look at a case like yours in that way, why there's nothing to do but admit that you are in the luxury class. The old world can go right along on its wartime way and never miss you."

He went into detail. There were three counts against me. The first one was simple enough: "You see, you deal in ideas. Now that's all right when everything is running smoothly. If we are not facing a crisis, nobody can object to a man's doing pretty much as he pleases—studying Sanskrit if he wants to, as some of the men do over in the Harvard Yard there. But in these times—and remember, this is no expression of any personal wish of mine—ideas are out the window."

"I Am a Luxury." Reprinted from *Harper's Magazine*, November, 1943, by permission of the author.

So I know where I belong: somewhere below beano and dog racing. And to the first of the three counts that leave me on this level I must plead guilty. As a free-lance writer I do occupy myself with all sorts of reflections, comparisons, and contrasts, points of view, projected designs, and general prospects that are lumped together as "ideas." I find it interesting to ponder—sometimes not too gravely—the advantages and defects of our present ways of living together, the importance of the art spirit in men's lives, the influence of men's ingenuity on economic beliefs, the hungering of men for a religious justification of existence, and a thousand other matters that in one way or another seem to me to have something to do with life's livableness.

In like manner I must admit that I find myself living at a time when there is an overwhelming tendency to get along without ideas. It is not the style to bother with anything still in the stage of theory, anything deep down or far ahead. Predigested "practical" surface facts are the thing. They do not require any holding of one's opinions in suspense, or the mental eyestrain of trying to take the long view. The vogue of the hour is the impatient attitude.

That this should be true in wartime is perhaps natural. We must bend all our energies to the immediate task of saving our souls. But just what is it that saves souls? The wartime neglect of that question is fundamentally but a part of the general neglect of ideas that had settled upon us long before the war came. In the jittery days of universal appeasement it was difficult to get for ideas the consideration they deserved. The difficulty has only increased. Anyone who would go into a question with a certain quiet thoroughness soon discovers how completely he is out of step, not only with a vast majority whose concern is always with the tinsel of life, but with all sorts of persons in places of power who get credit for thinking when they are only jobbers in other men's secondhand generalities.

But it is more than a disregard of ideas; it is a fear of them. The sturdy-looking citizen that one meets in trips over the country fears ideas with the fear of a frightened child. "There was never any reason for dragging our beautiful country into somebody else's war, and I turn off the radio whenever anybody begins to discuss the matter." "Why should I worry about whether we have colleges of liberal arts or not?" "No, I have never read the Russian constitution, and by God, I never expect to." "Why worry about how many Chinamen are killed off? There'll be plenty left." "I know nothing about the Beveridge Plan. If you care for a practical man's opinion, the more we try to plan, the worse off we are." "No, I am not losing sleep over any damned post-war world. It will be bad enough when we get to it without thinking about it in advance. All those things have to work themselves out automatically."

It need not be an idea that embraces the destinies of other peoples. I have never gone on a crusade for any "alien" idea—that I know of. But from the resistance I have encountered when I have championed purely native ones, I marvel that an idea of any sort is ever able to make its way out into the main

current of human tradition. Sometimes I am led to wonder if the fatty degeneration we have suffered in keeping away from ideas has not rendered us sightless. I wonder if we are not losing the war—by losing sight of what it was to settle—losing our integrity of spirit, dying faster than we are growing, today, tomorrow, imperceptibly ahead, because not even one great idea stirs us to envision anything beyond the customary. We are enthralled in the most deadening isolationism that man can experience—that of being swept by events first in one direction and then in another in a fishfly existence where we are out of touch with our elemental selves.

So why should I shrink too much from the charge that I deal in ideas?

The second count was equally simple, and it was closely related to the first: "You are just an individual. You do not have the backing of any institution or organization. You speak only for yourself."

Even if the charge were a criminal one, every word of it is true. Twenty years ago, of my own choice—and that of my wife—I elected to live as one of the free individuals often eulogized in American oratory. I would be an independent producer; I would live by selling my "ideas" in the open market. It was not because I was a professional rebel. I was not trying to be different. I only wished to be myself. It would be interesting, I thought, to stand related to the world through whatever merit the things I was concerned with might possess, without the weight of any organized influence. Not that I spurn institutions or organizations, or shrink from contributing anything I can through them. But I had seen the overworking of prestige, and I had come to prize the feeling that I need not depend on an institution or organization for my point of view, or for its acceptance by anybody else.

I know, then, something of the attitude in my own country toward anyone who tries to go the individual's way. It did not take me long to discover that the men who shout the loudest and most savagely in favor of the sanctity of the individual are the ones who depend for their own existence and power on some kind of organization. Their declamatory pronouncements have become the greatest of all American jokes. We bow down before an organization as if it were ten gods. A man who has a card showing that he has office headquarters somewhere, no matter how inconsequential he may be himself or how shaky or even insolvent the business he represents, stands somewhere in the world, and on the strength of something actually not known, and sometimes nonexistent, can forthwith get hotel accommodations and credit, or transportation, that the individual, no matter how important or solvent, must wait for until he has established his right to respectful consideration. I have stood in line and seen it happen a thousand times.

There is a fear of the individual comparable to the fear of an idea. An individual is not readily predictable. An individual might kick over the traces—he does if anybody does—and an organization never gets going to that extent. Men will contribute money for chemical or biological laboratories, a famous university president once reminded me, yet will balk at investing

money in stray potential Pasteurs to whom the laboratories would be heaven. Not even a poet can be thought of in his own name. He must be known as the winner of some organization's prize, the recipient of some organization's gratuity. Then he becomes somebody. "William Shakespeare, famous as an early Pulitzer prize-winner. . . ."

A man has to be thought of as a representative, however humble. Once when I was to speak to several thousand persons in a Midwestern city, and the newspaper reporter came with his cameraman to the hotel, he noted that my address was Cambridge, Massachusetts, and began by asking: "Connected with Harvard University, aren't you?" He was greatly disappointed when he learned that I was not, though he confessed that he supposed Harvard was a snooty place. He was still more disappointed when I added that I once had a brief and happy connection with Harvard, for he immediately took it for granted that I had been thrown out for gross immorality or unpatriotic practices. Finally when the cameraman had gone he said confidentially: "Now I pledge you my word I will not mention anything in my story; but would you mind telling me, just for my own information, who it is who is sending you here?"

I enjoyed the satisfaction of telling him that I was there only to represent myself. But when I went to the auditorium and saw a printed program, I found beneath my name the words: "of Harvard University."

Sometimes I myself have felt the thinness of the thread of an individual's life. When I go to see a friend who is the head of a specially creditable organization, and catch a glimpse of him through four or five open doors at ease at his desk, a hall clock ticking ponderously, I think he must be fortunate. Occasionally when I see the friendly banker far back in his solid place surrounded by vice-presidents, collectors of loans, and vaults with shining doors, I experience a sudden sinking at the thought of my precariousness. A drunken driver, a slippery pavement, a thoughtless word—so slight a thing might leave me just nowhere at all.

But soon that is over. Here I am. Every time I am in certain cities I walk past buildings with polished granite fronts that once housed solid banks that I have outlasted. Sometimes, too, in the quiet I remember William James: "So I am against all big organizations as such, national ones first and foremost; against all big successes and big results; and in favor of the eternal forces of truth which always work in the individual and immediately unsuccessful way, underdogs always, till history comes, after they are long dead, and puts them on the top." Not that I have illusions about being miraculously converted into any kind of great St. Bernard topdog at a later time. But I do know as well as a man can know anything that much of something essential to life is destroyed in the wholesale pressures of top-heavy organizations, and is nurtured in the ways of individuals.

As for the third count, it was devastating beyond any ordinary defense: "You are showing gray above the ears."

Now where is there anyone who can stand up and say that gray hairs—even premature ones—have not become a misfortune and a tragedy in our industrial-minded society? We grow tearful over the preciousness of equality of opportunity, and then on a given day, in the name of an abstraction, we announce that henceforth there is to be no further opportunity whatsoever. From that date forward experience and wisdom add up to exactly nothing at all. When New York City reports something like a half-million men and women past sixty-five and therefore exposed to the humiliation of being made to feel that they are too old to be useful, too old to make important decisions, too old to take up new ideas, we can know by the simplest processes of arithmetic how terrible a thing is happening to the country as a whole.

In a year when war supposedly had created a demand for every kind of human worker, I have spent time in trying to find employment for several men who were in no case over fifty-five. They were college graduates, they had had diversified and successful experience; but through the country's shift to a war economy, or similar dislocation, they were left with nothing to do. These men had to tramp the streets for months, and wait by the hour in line, until two of them contemplated suicide as the simplest way out.

My own case might have been tragic had it not become a farce. At the suggestion of the Vice-President of the United States, a senator, and three or four heads of commissions or committees, I sought in some way to enlist for the wars—for any kind of usefulness that would help win a struggle that I had been denounced for advocating before Pearl Harbor made my view official. After I had filled out blanks—often enough in duplicate—twenty-eight different times through a year and a half, and had had more than a hundred interviews and special consultations, I luckily came into possession of a memorandum made by the head of one office to this effect: "Why not be honest with this man and tell him that, though we have no age limit, it always turns out that the person we are looking for is younger?"

A new ethic is resulting. There are all kinds of human beings past sixty-five. Men and women of great need or great energy have discovered that an employer may notice no decline in their work at all if only they succeed in concealing their age. So when circumstances permit, they lie about the matter. One of my oldest friends—a middle-aged man when I was a boy—moved fortunately from one city to another when he gave up a position which he had long held. He was young-looking and he was competent. He stepped his years back just a decade, and secured a position where the retiring age for office workers was seventy. So when at seventy-nine he spoke regretfully of having only one more year to go, everybody talked about what a shame it was to lose the services of such a man just because he approached seventy. I know persons in their thirties who have "lost" their birth certificates and are building up a buffer of reserve paper years to use if they still care to work on when they are sixty-five. Eventually though, they do come to a deadline, and are left—as a distinguished retired university professor put it—"to sit down to enjoy the hell of waiting for the inevitable."

But no reminder that I may some day reach sixty-five disturbs me too much. For nobody can retire me. My destiny is not in the hands of any industrial head, or university president, or other single person who can call me in some morning for the final interview. I can continue doing anything that interests me. I may even decide to start one movement: I may go forth and incite those who have grown more rebellious as they have grown older—as anyone must do who reflects upon what the species might have achieved by now—to get together and reveal to the world its true state and its potential state, in the light of experience.

So it is not unbearably depressing to be charged with being a luxury. And I could enter a countercharge. I believe that the combination of attitudes which makes me out a luxury is a menace to America and the world. Is it so difficult to see what has happened where too many people have not bothered with ideas, but let somebody else do their thinking for them? Is it much more difficult to see, on the other hand, how ideas grounded firmly in individuals are a source of immeasurable power? Is it not possible to see in like manner that if we are to have the reverence for all life which a true world outlook requires, it is little short of idiocy to fight for the freedom of the Czechs or Chinese—and they ought to have been fought for sooner—and then in the same breath treat the grayheads—or any other minority—in our own country with an asphyxiating genteel intolerance? And if it is possible to see these things, just who is to call upon a man to stand and be sentenced because he busies himself with trying to get the hang of things a little in his own way, and hopes to keep on right ahead to the limits of nature?

I have an ironic impression that it is not the defense that ought to stand convicted, but the prosecution.

CAREY McWILLIAMS *After receiving a law degree from the University of Southern California in 1927, Colorado-born Carey McWilliams set out to win his way as an attorney. His growing interest in labor and land policy and in collective ownership of farms led him to carry on writing and field work which soon all but eclipsed his law practice. McWilliams' *Factories in the Fields* (1939) was a careful documentation of the material used also by John Steinbeck in his celebrated novel, *Grapes of Wrath*—although the men had not met and no collaboration had been intended. In 1939 McWilliams was appointed California Commissioner of Immigration and Housing; in 1940 he became President of the Committee for the Protection of the Foreign-Born; in 1941 he received a Guggenheim award for study of Hawaiian land ownership practice; in 1942 he published *Ill Fares the Land*, a study of migrant workers; and in 1943 he finished *Brothers Under the Skin*, a stirring appeal for honest facing of race problems. Though McWilliams and vested interests have had their bitter differences, few have questioned his ability or integrity.*

THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF DEMOCRACY

AN UTTERLY unique conjunction of events has presented America with a magnificent opportunity, at this moment, to go forward with the unfinished business of democracy. "Rarely has history provided," states *PM*, "such a happy confluence of a great ideal—the extension of democratic rights—and a great practical necessity—the winning of the world's greatest war." If we fail to measure up to the potentialities of this unprecedented opportunity, our failure will be so great as to defy measurement or appraisal. Now, assuredly, the time has come.

Historically, the time is most opportune. After the Civil War, America probably lacked the strength, as it certainly lacked the will, to go forward and consolidate the democratic gains which had been won at such a terrific price. It is also arguable that the masses of the Negro people were, at the time, not prepared to accept the responsibilities of full citizenship. Furthermore it may have been wise politically to have first given the South an opportunity to deal with the problem, despite the suffering and turmoil which the decision involved. The nation now possesses, however, the will and the physical unity and the power to achieve what it should have achieved fifty years ago—total democracy in the United States.

Scientific, as well as historical, developments now make possible a consolidation of democratic gains and the implementation of previously ceded theoretical rights. Until it could be scientifically demonstrated that there was no basis for the notion of "superior" and "inferior" races, there remained a preserve within which it was difficult to extend the democratic process. Democracy was compelled to rest its major premises on partial and extremely insecure foundations, until scientific research into race problems had reached a degree of maturity. In going forward with the extension of democracy today, we do so with the assured feeling that we are not acting quixotically but upon scientifically sound assumptions. A cultural lag existed, in this field, which had to be overcome. Today, for example, it is generally agreed that "the Negro problem is a race problem not in the sense that a purity of Negroid traits has given the American colored person a unique biological nature which makes him behave differently from white people, but rather in that being all or any part Negroid in appearance (the biological fact) has given him a condition of 'high visibility' which enables others to identify him and place him in a special position in society (the sociological fact)."¹

It is not only in research into the concept of race that science has made marked progress of recent years. The general problems of cultural adjustment and of personality development have been thoroughly investigated and well-

"The Unfinished Business of Democracy," from *Brothers Under the Skin* by Carey McWilliams. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

¹ *Color, Class and Personality*, 1942, p. xv.

recognized techniques of demonstrated soundness exist today for dealing with cultural conflict. What are termed "race problems" are not essentially biological problems; they are not insoluble; they are "susceptible to social invention and intelligent manipulation." We must accept, as Dr. Ruth Benedict has said, "all the implications of our human inheritance, one of the most important of which is the small scope of biologically transmitted behavior and the enormous role of the cultural process in the transmission of tradition." Culture, as she points out, is not a biologically transmitted complex: "not one item of man's social organization, of his language, of his local religion, is carried in his germ-cell."

Also it has become possible to allay the fear of white people that they might be engulfed by some dark and alien strain in the population. Regardless of who its carriers may be at the moment, there is no doubt, writes Dr. Benedict, "about the cultural continuity of civilization." The best assurance against this once widely publicized bogey of engulfment is to spread democracy throughout the world and to extend democracy at home. People need no longer fear that the encroachment of colored peoples threatens their society and its institutions. "The desire of Negro youth," writes Robert Sutherland, "is not for admission to white society, but for a chance to support a way of living which would mark anyone, white or colored, as belonging to a culturally superior group."

Just as subject peoples throughout the world are coming into the possession of the technics of modern civilization, so colored minority groups within the United States are coming into possession of the rapidly developed wealth of anthropological, sociological, and psychological research of the last fifty years. As they acquire this knowledge, it no longer becomes even politically feasible to continue a system of wholesale discrimination. "The so-called racial explanation of differences in human performance and achievement," writes Mr. A. J. Toynbee, "is either an ineptitude or a fraud." In the face of this mounting wealth of scientific evidence, it is simply no longer tenable to pretend that "backward races" cannot acquire the fundamentals of civilized life. For the same forces, as Alain Locke has said, "which have all but annihilated longitude and latitude also have foreshortened cultural and social distance, and have telescoped their traditional but imaginary dividing lines." The increasing interdependency of all groups, not only in the nation but in the world, occasioned by the progress of civilization has laid the foundation for what Dr. Benedict calls a vast extension of "in-group mutual dependency and mutual support." We know, today, that "a nation can be administered without creating victims."

From a practical point of view, we are driven to precisely the same conclusion. "Since internal unity and co-operation," writes Mr. Sutherland, "are as much a part of national defense as are battleships and fortifications, the importance of allowing no large minority to feel arbitrarily excluded is obvious." And, if we consider world totals, all our minorities are large. Furthermore, as Mr. Lester B. Granger has demonstrated, there are not enough available workers in the United States to fill the needs of war industry and match the vast

slave resources of the Axis powers. The training and full utilization of some 6,000,000 Negro employables is, therefore, an inescapable practical necessity.

The engineering of a program to end racial discrimination in America is, today, a practical political possibility. The war has released throughout the world (despite momentary manifestations to the contrary) a great upsurge of democratic sentiment. It is now possible to mobilize the political strength necessary to effectuate those controls and procedures essential to a real job of social engineering on race problems. One can sense the political feasibility of executing such a program; the problem, as Mr. Sutherland states, is "in the air." Today it is possible to count upon a progressive concern with democratic ideals which, as Alain Locke states, is "rising now almost to a ground swell of popular feeling and conviction," in endeavoring to pull "reactionary democracy out of the narrows and set us heading for new democratic goals." The reluctance of the rest of the nation to interfere in the South has noticeably abated in the last two decades. Thousands of people realize today that, as *PM* has stated, "the south needs help." Southerners such as Jonathan Daniels concede that "the south has not done anything approaching greatness in what may be called a self-reconstruction to give the Negro all that we wish all Americans to have." There are progressive elements throughout the South that would actually relish national intervention.

All of America is coming to a general realization of the fact that the South's attempted solution of the race problem—namely, a system of biracialism—is an obvious failure. Racial segregation, like slavery itself, is a malignant growth in a democracy.² Biracialism is stultifying, costly, stupid, and self-perpetuating. It is essentially impossible and impractical; it tends to spread throughout the nation; and it creates, as Mr. Carter states, "a spiritual hiatus between the races, fostering in one a feeling of inferiority, and in the other an equally insidious superiority complex. It breeds resentment, suspicion and humiliation, and undermines the Negro's faith in democratic government itself." It robs the Negro, and other minorities, of their rightful cultural and historical inheritance. The attempted enforcement of such a system during the last forty years has proved to be a dismal failure. By the 1920's biracialism had become, as Mr. Carter states, a dead end.

Now is not only the opportune time to liquidate the last vestiges of this system in America, but we *must* proceed to do so if the critical tensions already developing are not to explode, with disastrous consequences, either in the immediate future or during the postwar period. We face, as Jonathan Daniels has said, "a crisis about color." Increasing tensions in the South since 1940 demonstrate, as Mr. Daniels states, "the wearing thin of the relationships which for the most part southern white men have made." These tensions are certain to increase with the progress of the war itself; hence we must establish *now* those controls and safeguards which are essential to prevent a repetition of the postwar race riots of 1919-1921. Perhaps the most ominous sign on the horizon is the impending collapse of the plantation economy of the Deep

² See "Shadows of the Slave Tradition" by Elmer Anderson Carter, *Survey Graphic*, November, 1942.

South. During the past ten years, as Charles S. Johnson has pointed out, Negroes have been virtually forced out of agriculture. With the rapid expansion of mechanization in agriculture, the entire structure of the plantation system will be transformed. Ways and means must, therefore, be devised now by which Negroes may be absorbed into nonagricultural types of employment.

Industrial developments alone dictate the abolition of the biracial system. Segregation is not compatible with industrial efficiency; it is at fatal variance with the *modus operandi* of industrialism. "Modern industry," as Mr. Johnson states, "changes too rapidly and is too complex for a caste system." The Criminal Code of South Carolina provides today (Article 1272) that it is unlawful for any concern engaged in cotton textile manufacture to employ Negroes and whites to work in the same room, or to use the same doors of entrance or exit at the same time, or to use the same pay ticket windows or the same stairways or windows, or to use the same lavatories, toilets, drinking water buckets or glasses. Such a statute in an area where Negroes constitute the bulk of the available labor supply is an unwarranted and utterly indefensible shackle upon industry itself. Those who point to the South as our "Economic Problem No. 1" state that it must have more industrial development. But the greatest barrier to the industrial development of the South is Jim Crowism itself. Hence the bulk of war contracts are going to non-Southern areas (the South has received only about 6.3 per cent of these contracts to date). Actually, as Mr. Mark Ethridge has said, "The setup of industry incident to the war effort has retarded, rather than accelerated, the effort of the south to improve its position as an industrial section in relation to the rest of the nation."³ The wartime development of industry, therefore, will not of itself be of much assistance to the South. The war does create, however, not only the necessity for industrial expansion, but the opportunity to use wartime emergency controls to develop a new pattern of relationships. While the use of these controls would unquestionably be upheld during the war, they might not be upheld afterwards. All the more reason, therefore, to use them *now*.

The metaphysics of this strange war also lead to much the same conclusions. Ideologically we have been driven to the necessity of making a world-wide declaration of human rights—the Four Freedoms—thereby laying the foundation for an international democracy. The outlines of such a new international order already exist, as Alain Locke has said, within the phalanx of the United Nations which "unites an unprecedented assemblage of the races, cultures and peoples of the world." This New World setting has, as he states, "altered the geography of our lives." We cannot retreat to the prewar relationship of races and cultures even if we desired to do so. For part of this development, we are indebted to the Axis. Once Germany and Japan had raised the issue of ethnic nationalism, racism became, as Dr. Locke states, "an avowed principle of state policy." We were forced to meet the issue. I say "we" advisedly, for it is America that has taken, and must continue to take, the initiative. The more we counter the Axis race propaganda, "the more paradoxical our race atti-

³ *Louisville Courier-Journal*, June 21, 1942.

tudes and traditions will become in contrast." If we fail to recognize this dynamic now, then we are doomed to Fascism: we will, in effect, become Fascist. Thus the war has, as Dr. Locke says, brought the Negro question "around from a back-yard domestic issue to a front-porch exposure"; what was once "a minority disability becomes a general weakness." And what is true of the Negro is also true of all other colored minority groups in this country. For "these silent and waiting multitudes (the colored peoples of the world)," writes Frederick L. Schuman, "will conclude, wrongly no doubt but nonetheless irrevocably, that Western white men offer them only fair words and foul deeds, that the darker peoples have no stake in a war between rival oppressors, and that Axis arrogance may be more tolerable than democratic hypocrisy," unless we act *now*.

BERNARD DeVOTO *Since 1935 Mr. DeVoto (b. 1897) has written the essay called "The Easy Chair" which appears each month in Harper's Magazine. The one that follows deals with the generation which includes most of the parents of the readers of this volume, who, as young men and women, lived in the years sometimes known as the "Naughty Twenties." It is to this "lost generation" that the author, who graduated from Harvard in 1920, is supposed to belong, and concerning which he has something penetrating to say. To the reader who is interested in the point of view which Mr. DeVoto discusses, F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Beautiful and the Damned and Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises are suggested.*

ANOTHER LOST GENERATION?

YOU MAY remember the Lost Generation. It was primarily a literary phenomenon, an invention of novelists. It was a myth cultivated because it gave fine effects in prose. The Lost Generation was supposed to consist of men whose souls had been so maimed by the ugliness of war that they saw quite through life's hollow shams, and of women who caught the contagion from them, presumably as the supreme benignity of love. The phrase itself was an invention of Miss Gertrude Stein, whose art had no connection whatever with life or death, love or hate, rejoicing or grief, success or failure, belief or doubt, any other emotion of mankind, any experience of anyone, or any of the values that enable people to live together—an art which floated freely in a medium of pure caprice sustained by nothing except its awareness of its own inner wondrousness. The literary development of the phrase was almost exclusively American, and its first, perhaps its greatest

"Another Lost Generation?" Reprinted from *Harper's Magazine*, April, 1944, by permission of the author.

prophet was Mr. Ernest Hemingway, who has lived to recant. Mr. Hemingway epitomized the entire meaning of his time in symbols of sexual impotence. He believed with a full heart that the symbols were altogether tragic, though a sounder judgment would be that they expressed a first-rate literary criticism.

The idea of the Lost Generation was sickly and unclean. No one has ever known how many soldiers of the last war, or how many contemporaries of theirs who had not known war at first hand, identified themselves with it. I do not think that many did. In the variety, vigor, and optimism of the American people following the last war there is no evidence that any considerable number thought of themselves as lost, and literature is far less able to persuade people to imitate it than writers like to believe. It may be, however, that literary praise of a moral depletion said to have been induced by the ugliness of war persuaded some people to act on it. If so, I suggest that we may include among the problems of reconversion a study of therapeutic and even preventive measures. If it is possible it is certainly desirable to dispense with a Lost Generation altogether this time, both in literature and in the populace at large.

Military physicians and psychiatrists have lately issued to the general public some suggestions concerning attitudes toward crippled veterans. We are advised—wholly for the sake of the crippled—to avoid expressing excessive sympathy. We are told to ignore their handicaps, to make as little fuss as possible, to treat them as a matter of course so far as we can. In this way, the Medical Corps says, we shall be helping them to acquire a sense of reality and, by helping them to be casual toward themselves, shall be helping them to triumph over their handicaps. If that is good therapeutics for the wounded, it is also an excellent attitude to adopt toward veterans who have not been crippled. Certainly it is an excellent attitude for them to adopt toward themselves.

What I say implies no failure to understand that the debt which the United States owes its defenders, crippled or whole, is beyond payment. Even the hastiest reader will understand that I am not proposing any skimping of our obligations to those who have been physically or mentally wounded in the service of the country. For the incapacitated everything possible must be done. For the wounded everything must be done that can heal their wounds, help them to overcome their handicaps, and so far as possible make up to them for the satisfactions and achievements which their wounds may have denied them. And those who emerge whole will have an imperative claim on the nation for whatever education, training, or guidance can enable them to resume life in the commonwealth on the most favorable terms. No compensation could be enough for the strain, hardship, and suffering undergone, the time lost, the dreams and ambitions forfeited, the sacrifice made in our service.

Nevertheless, if a tough-minded realism is essential to the soldier in war, it is equally essential to the ex-soldier in peace. The hard decree of nature is that he has got to live his life out to the end. Either he is going to make as much as he can of that life or something is going to frustrate him, and the easiest possible frustration is a paralysis of will engendered by self-pity. Cer-

tainly it is too bad that he was not permitted to make what he could of his personality and capacities, as the years of peace promised he would be able to. Certainly it is too bad that the years of his youth were spent in a war he never asked for, that the fulfillment of his promise has been delayed or quite forbidden, that he has had to experience horror and brutality and filth. But in peace as well as in war, time and chance happeneth to them all, the conditions of life are not what any of us would choose. It is too bad that we grow old, too bad that we prove less admirable than we thought, too bad that love fails, ambition peters out, friends die, dreams come to nothing. Given only omnipotence, any of us could create a world more kindly than the one we have to live in, but man must live in the world that is. He has always had to live in it, and he will have to live in it henceforth whether or not he has gone to war. He will live in it more successfully if he will understand that he has no claim on its tenderness, that none of its rigors will be relaxed for him because he has been a soldier.

I say nothing about the compensations which are any soldier's. They certainly exist—self-mastery, the knowledge that one has met and passed the ultimate test, the knowledge of dedication and sacrifice, the fellowship of men fighting in contempt of death—and in every war there have been some who counted them worth more than all the rest. But, disregarding them, there is no realistic philosophy for the ex-soldier except a recognition that fortune turned out the way it did. On him happened to fall the sternest obligation of citizenship as it fell on other Americans in three major and three minor wars. That turn of the wheel may have been, if you will, hard luck. It was hard luck that war prevented him from being the garage mechanic, radio announcer, or physician that he designed to be. It was hard luck that he had to serve a term in hell. It remains hard luck that memories of unspeakable horror will abide with him, that he has lost more than he can regain, that part of his life has been, in private terms, wasted. But it is hard luck in the peacetime world that we accomplish less than we hoped to, that a wife or a child dies, that our personalities erode, that we deal less than magnificently with the assigned task. Like the civilian, the soldier and the ex-soldier have had hard luck—and that is that. The waste or failure of any individual does not mean that God had it in for him, and no private pain in the bowels proves that the world is evil.

The Lost Generation mistake was to generalize individual failure into a law of God and to suppose that a private pain in the bowels revealed the nature of reality. Every soldier has to learn a personal discipline of courage for war. The ex-soldier has got to learn an identical discipline for peace, since the inexorable condition is that the world's work will go on. Either he will take such a part in it as he best can or he will get in its way and be run over. Either war is an interruption of it or else we are all fools—and no fool greater than the soldier. War was not gentle with him; peace will not try to be.

Literature would do well to clarify its understanding. Following the last war it gave us, and gave us worshipfully, the image of a hero crying into his gin

because he had seen more than he could bear. A hero sneering at fools who tried to make something of their lives because he had come to understand that there is no use in effort, the mourners go about the streets, and desire must fail. It gave us, that is, the image of a hero who was either a craven fool or a desperately sick soul. It gave us this image, either base or diseased, and bade us not pity but admire. Well, one thinks of the returning doughboy of 1919 who had no time for tears because he was too busy trying to get his job back and pick up where he had left off. One thinks of an earlier war that had more victims than Mr. Hemingway's, a war much more comparable to this one. Of a man making his way homeward from Appomattox in ragged and stinking shoddy and without shoes, to get the field plowed, the kids fed, and the shattered South rebuilt. Or making his way homeward to Vermont or Iowa with the best years of his youth devoured by war, no fine thing done, no fine thing possible in the time remaining. Both had known lice and the fire of dysentery in the bowels, hunger and panic, the private filth and public feculence of war. Both had seen friends blown to bloody shreds beside them. Both were items of helplessness, victims of the evil fate which twists the lives of men quite irresponsibly. War had left neither of them any intelligent choice except to recognize that they were lost, to renounce effort, and to rise superior to the illusions of labor and free will. So they went out and sowed the crops, repaired the barn, begot children, served on the school board, and sat with their shoes off at the end of a hard day. They broke the prairies, dug the mines, occupied the West, built the railroads, manned the industry that remade the world, tugged the United States to the forefront of civilization, and laid up the wealth that was later to support literature while it found all this an illusion. A defect in them was that they offered prose too little chance for exquisite effects. That was also a defect in their grandsons who came back from Château-Thierry and the Argonne with a feeling that they had done an unpleasant job rather creditably, and straightway got to work as near as possible to the place where they had left off. Coarseness of soul, economic Puritanism, or mere vitality prevented them from understanding that they were lost.

The Lost Generation, that is, was a cliché, one of the formulas, superstitions, or stereotypes which the pressure of literary fashion is apt to substitute for ideas. This time it would be wise for writers to avoid thinking of the returning soldier as lost. And there are other components of that old cliché which it will be desirable not to repeat. As, for instance, thinking of the returning soldier as a dupe. We went to war in 1917 to defeat a threat to our national existence—to crush institutions, even conceptions of mankind, that were a mortal danger to our own. But after the war was won it became strangely fashionable to believe that we had gone to war to secure the principal of Mr. Morgan's loans to Great Britain or (this with no apparent sense of incongruity) to earn profits for the death merchants, the makers of armament who were above nationality. If that were true, then the returning soldiers had indeed been dupes. The logic was unimpeachable—only the premise was wrong. At the present moment it seems impossible that anyone outside

the fools' paradise of Peace Now will ever be able to persuade anyone that we went to war in 1941 for anyone's bonds or anyone's profits. Too many, one thinks, will remember the years we lived through on the way to war. Too many will remember the rising of the flood, the onrush of Nazism, the ghastly summer of 1940, the stunned hours following Pearl Harbor. But though quite as many could remember the autumn of 1914 and the early spring of 1917, the cliché of stupidity and betrayal formed nevertheless. This time we ought to do what we can to prevent its forming. We are supposed to learn from experience.

We are supposed, I repeat, to learn from experience. In the literature of the Lost Generation it was orthodox to deride such attributes as patriotism, courage, loyalty, self-sacrifice, and the resolution to die in defense of values greater than oneself. Such virtues were sternly shown to be snares, traps, or tricks of illusion by which unscrupulous, clever persons were able to manipulate the stupid to their private gain. John Doe was an uncritical fool whom an international banker or a merchant of death could delude into dying gallantly for his profit balance. As time went on this exalted understanding changed somewhat and it became evident that John Doe lacked gallantry altogether. Back in the world's lost springtime there had perhaps been such virtues as courage and self-sacrifice, but clearly they did not exist now, not at least in the brutish citizen of everyday life. The modern world had brutalized John Doe, coarsened his soul, softened his nature; he was scum and a menace, incapable of greatness. Only a little while ago, so recently that every bystander remembers it, the manipulators of these clichés woke with a shock that verged on panic to the dilemma which the outbreak of war horribly unmasked. The virtues of patriotism, courage, and self-sacrifice, which had lately seemed fetishes proper to inferior people only, were essential to the survival even of the literary cliché, and there was no possible place where they could be sought except among the people who had lately been proved to have no capacity for them at all.

Read your morning newspaper. The chronicle of patriotism, courage, fortitude, loyalty, self-sacrifice, and willingness to die for matters greater than oneself—the chronicle of ordinary, unpretentious heroism has no end. Apparently such virtues are the ordinary endowment of people everywhere, apparently they are attributes of the human race, and we may assume that they cannot be inspired by literature or even implanted by a crisis. John Doe has always had them. He is a different person from the literary portrayal of him in the Lost Generation, and he always was. For the time being literary thinking is admitting as much. It describes him with a nauseous phrase, a phrase that reeks of condescension, the Common Man. But, reading its morning newspaper, it is willing to concede that the Common Man is endowed by nature with heroic virtues.

Precisely that amendment of opinion must be remembered in the period of reconversion. The day will come when the graveyard shift can check out for the last time, writers can retool, and literature turn to examine an ended war. Hopeful new ideas will bud and glistening new clichés begin to form. So, if there should be another impulse to portray the ex-soldier as a fool duped by

cleverer men, if it begins to appear once more that the run-of-the-mill citizen is a boor and a craven enemy of all good things—let us remember that literature formally decided otherwise while the heat was on. We may be able to forestall or discredit another literature of the Lost Generation.

John Doe can remember too, when as an ex-soldier he takes up citizenship again. He has had the empirical proof. When the heat went on he found that he possessed courage, fortitude, loyalty, self-sacrifice, and all the rest. He found that they sufficed for war and may intelligently decide that they will suffice for peace. If he reaches that decision his generation will not be lost.

4. *Horizons*

JOHN STEINBECK *Few American authors of the moment can claim the distinction enjoyed by John Stein-*
 EDWARD F. RICKETTS *beck. Born in Salinas, California, in 1902, he later attended Stanford University, where he showed a marked interest in science later reflected in the writing of Sea of Cortez, a book which owes its origin in part to its author's desire to escape the storm that followed the publication of Grapes of Wrath. The publicity accorded to (and the deserved reputation or financial success of) such works as In Dubious Battle, Tortilla Flat, Of Mice and Men, The Moon Is Down, and various short stories should not blind the reader to the romantic and all-important fact that the author's compassion for humanity and courageous espousal of honest values against sham and genteelism were born through a bitter travail: Steinbeck tried many an odd job—picking fruit, painting houses, writing unrecognized tales—before success crowned his efforts in the form of critics' praise and Hollywood's dollars. Edward F. Ricketts (b. 1897) remains an elusive, almost anonymous, figure in the public eye. Co-author with Steinbeck of the memorable Sea of Cortez, he shyly retreats from publicity in the common reference volumes so dear to editors. We know (Writing from Observation, edited by Hanawalt and Newcomb, published by Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942) that Ricketts early evinced interest in science, that he is responsible for the scientific part of the unusual collaboration, and that he is also a humanist: he enjoys (by his own confession) old music, Chinese poetry, and "cold beer on a hot day." Further, deponent saith not.*

SEA OF CORTEZ

[After an introduction explaining the reasons for taking their trip in the 76-foot *Western Flyer* (a chartered Diesel-engined craft) through the Sea of Cortez (old name for Gulf of California), the authors sum up their purpose in the words, "Let's see what we see, record what we find." The following is the opening chapter of the book.]

HOW DOES one organize an expedition: what equipment is taken, what sources read; what are the little dangers and the large ones? No one has ever written this. The information is not available. The design is simple, as simple as the design of a well-written book. Your expedition will be enclosed in the physical framework of start, direction, ports of call, and return. These you can forecast with some accuracy; and in the better-known parts of the world it is possible to a degree to know what the weather will be in a given season, how high and low the tides, and the hours of their occurrence. One can know within reason what kind of boat to take, how much food will be necessary for a given crew for a given time, what medicines are usually needed—all this subject to accident, of course.

We had read what books were available about the Gulf and they were few and in many cases confused. The *Coast Pilot* had not been adequately corrected for some years. A few naturalists with specialties had gone into the Gulf and, in the way of specialists, had seen nothing they hadn't wanted to. Clavigero, a Jesuit of the eighteenth century, had seen more than most and reported what he saw with more accuracy than most. There were some romantic accounts by young people who had gone into the Gulf looking for adventure and, of course, had found it. The same romantic drive aimed at the stockyards would not be disappointed. From the information available, a few facts did emerge. The Sea of Cortez, or the Gulf of California, is a long, narrow, highly dangerous body of water. It is subject to sudden and vicious storms of great intensity. The months of March and April are usually quite calm and dependable and the March-April tides of 1940 were particularly good for collecting in the littoral.

The maps of the region were self-possessed and confident about headlands, coastlines, and depth, but at the edge of the Coast they become apologetic—laid in lagoons with dotted lines, supposed and presumed their boundaries. The *Coast Pilot* spoke as heatedly as it ever does about mirage and treachery of light. Going back from the *Coast Pilot* to Clavigero, we found more visual warnings in his accounts of ships broken up and scattered, of wrecks and wayward currents; of fifty miles of sea more dreaded than any other. The *Coast Pilot*, like an elderly scientist, cautious and restrained, on one side—and the old

monk, setting down ships and men lost, and starvation on the inhospitable coasts.

In time of peace in the modern world, if one is thoughtful and careful, it is rather more difficult to be killed or maimed in the outland places of the globe than it is in the streets of our great cities, but the atavistic urge toward danger persists and its satisfaction is called adventure. However, your adventurer feels no gratification in crossing Market Street in San Francisco against the traffic. Instead he will go to a good deal of trouble and expense to get himself killed in the South Seas. In reputedly rough water, he will go in a canoe; he will invade deserts without adequate food and he will expose his tolerant and uninoculated blood to strange viruses. This is adventure. It is possible that his ancestor, wearying of the humdrum attacks of the saber-tooth, longed for the good old days of pterodactyl and triceratops.

We had no urge toward adventure. We planned to collect marine animals in a remote place on certain days and at certain hours indicated on the tide charts. To do this we had, in so far as we were able, to avoid adventure. Our plans, supplies, and equipment had to be more, not less, than adequate; and none of us was possessed of the curious boredom within ourselves which makes adventurers or bridge-players.

Our first problem was to charter a boat. It had to be sturdy and big enough to go to sea, comfortable enough to live on for six weeks, roomy enough to work on, and shallow enough so that little bays could be entered. The purse-seiners of Monterey were ideal for the purpose. They are dependable work boats with comfortable quarters and ample storage room. Furthermore, in March and April the sardine season is over and they are tied up. It would be easy, we thought, to charter such a boat; there must have been nearly a hundred of them anchored in back of the breakwater. We went to the pier and spread the word that we were looking for such a boat for charter. The word spread all right, but we were not overwhelmed with offers. In fact, no boat was offered. Only gradually did we discover the state of mind of the boat owners. They were uneasy about our project. Italians, Slavs, and some Japanese, they were primarily sardine fishers. They didn't even approve of fishermen who fished for other kinds of fish. They frankly didn't believe in the activities of the land—road-building and manufacturing and brick-laying. This was not a matter of ignorance on their part, but of intensity. All the direction-ism of thought and emotion that man was capable of went into sardine-fishing; there wasn't room for anything else. An example of this occurred later when we were at sea. Hitler was invading Denmark and moving up towards Norway; there was no telling when the invasion of England might begin; our radio was full of static and the world was going to hell. Finally in all the crackle and noise of the short-wave one of our men made contact with another boat. The conversation went like this:

"This is the *Western Flyer*. Is that you, Johnny?"

"Yeah, that you, Sparky?"

"Yeah, this is Sparky. How much fish you got?"

"Only fifteen tons; we lost a school today. How much fish you got?"

"We're not fishing."

"Why not?"

"Aw, we're going down in the Gulf to collect starfish and bugs and stuff like that."

"Oh, yeah? Well, O.K., Sparky, I'll clear the wave length."

"Wait, Johnny. You say you only got fifteen tons?"

"That's right. If you talk to my cousin, tell him, will you?"

"Yeah, I will, Johnny. *Western Flyer's* all clear now."

Hitler marched into Denmark and into Norway, France had fallen, the Maginot Line was lost—we didn't know it, but we knew the daily catch of every boat within four hundred miles. It was simply a directional thing; a man has only so much. And so it was with the chartering of a boat. The owners were not distrustful of us; they didn't even listen to us because they couldn't quite believe we existed. We were obviously ridiculous.

Now the time was growing short and we began to worry. Finally one boat owner who was in financial difficulty offered his boat at a reasonable price and we were ready to accept when suddenly he raised the price out of question and bolted. He was horrified at what he had done. He raised the price, not to cheat us, but to get out of going.

The boat problem was growing serious when Anthony Berry sailed into Monterey Bay on the *Western Flyer*. The idea was no shock to Tony Berry; he had chartered to the government for salmon tagging in Alaskan waters and was used to nonsense. Besides, he was an intelligent and tolerant man. He knew that he had idiosyncrasies and that some of his friends had. He was willing to let us do any crazy thing that we wanted so long as we (1) paid a fair price, (2) told him where to go, (3) did not insist that he endanger the boat, (4) got back on time, and (5) didn't mix him up in our nonsense. His boat was not busy and he was willing to go. He was a quiet young man, very serious and a good master. He knew some navigation—a rare thing in the fishing fleet—and he had a natural caution which we admired. His boat was new and comfortable and clean, the engines in fine condition. We took the *Western Flyer* on charter.

She was seventy-six feet long with a twenty-five-foot beam; her engine, a hundred and sixty-five horsepower direct reversible Diesel, drove her at ten knots. Her deckhouse had a wheel forward, then combination master's room and radio room, then bunkroom, very comfortable, and behind that the galley. After the galley, a large hatch gave into the fish-hold, and after the hatch were the big turn-table and roller of the purse-seiner. She carried a twenty-foot skiff and a ten-foot skiff. Her engine was a thing of joy, spotlessly clean, the moving surfaces shining and damp with oil and the green paint fresh and new on the housings. The engine-room floor was clean and all the tools polished and hung in their places. One look into the engine-room inspired confidence in the master. We had seen other engines in the fishing fleet and this perfection on the *Western Flyer* was by no means a general thing.

As crew we signed Tex Travis, engineer, and Sparky Enea and Tiny Colletto, seamen. All three were a little reluctant to go, for the whole thing was

crazy. None of us had been into the Gulf, although the master had been as far as Cape San Lucas, and the Gulf has a really bad name. It was a thoughtful crew who agreed to go with us.

We could never tell when the change of attitude toward us came, but it came very rapidly. Perhaps it was because Tony Berry was known as a cautious man who would not indulge in nonsense, or perhaps it was pure relief that at last it had been settled. All of a sudden we were overwhelmed with help. We had offers from men to go with us without pay. Sparky was offered a certain price for his job that was more than he would get from us. All he had to do was turn over his job and sit in Monterey and spend the money. But Sparky refused. Our project had become honorable. We had more help than we could use and advice enough to move the navies of the world.

We did not know what our crew thought of the expedition but later, in the field, they became good collectors—a little emotional sometimes, as when Tiny, in outrage at being pinched, declared a war of extermination on the whole Sally Lightfoot species, but on the whole collectors of taste and quickness.

The charter was signed with dignity and reverence. It is impossible to be light-hearted in the face of a ship's charter, for the law has foreseen or remembered the most doleful and arbitrary acts of God and has set them down as possibilities, but in the tone of inevitabilities. Thus, you read what you or the others must do in the case of wreck, or sunken rocks; of death at sea in its most painful and astonishing aspects; of injury to plank and keel; of water shortage and mutiny. Next to marriage settlement or sentence of death, a ship's charter is as portentous a document as has ever been written. Penalties are set down against both parties, and if on some morning the rising sun should find your ship in the middle of the Mojave Desert you have only to look again at the charter to find the blame assigned and the penalty indicated. It took us several hours to get over the solemn feeling the charter put on us. We thought we might live better lives and pay our debts, and one at least of us contemplated for one holy, horrified moment a vow of chastity.

But the charter was signed and food began to move into the *Western Flyer*. It is amazing how much food seven people need to exist for six weeks. Cases of spaghetti, cases and cases of peaches and pineapple, of tomatoes, whole Romano cheeses, canned milk in coveys, flour and cornmeal, gallons of olive oil, tomato paste, crackers, cans of butter and jam, catsup and rice, beans and bacon and canned meats, vegetables and soups in cans; truckloads of food. And all this food was stored eagerly and happily by the crew. It disappeared into cupboards, under little hatches in the galley floor, and many cases went below.

We had done a good deal of collecting, but largely in temperate zones. The equipment for collecting, preserving, and storing specimens was selected on the basis of experience in other waters and of anticipation of difficulties imposed by a hot humid country. In some cases we were right, in others very wrong.

In a small boat, the library should be compact and available. We had constructed a strong, steel-reinforced wooden case, the front of which hinged down to form a desk. This case holds about twenty large volumes and has

two filing cases, one for separates (scientific reprints) and one for letters; a small metal box holds pens, pencils, erasers, clips, steel tape, scissors, labels, pins, rubber bands, and so forth. Another compartment contains a three-by-five-inch card file. There are cubby-holes for envelopes, large separates, small separates, typewriter paper, carbon, a box for India ink and glue. The construction of the front makes room for a portable typewriter, drawing board, and T-square. There is a long narrow space for rolled charts and maps. Closed, this compact and complete box is forty-four inches long by eighteen by eighteen; loaded, it weighs between three and four hundred pounds. It was designed to rest on a low table or in an unused bunk. Its main value is compactness, completeness, and accessibility. We took it aboard the *Western Flyer*. There was no table for it to rest on. It did not fit in a bunk. It could not be put on the deck because of moisture. It ended up lashed to the rail on top of the deckhouse, covered with several layers of tarpaulin and roped on. Because of the roll of the boat it had to be tied down at all times. It took about ten minutes to remove the tarpaulin, untie the lashing line, open the cover, squeeze down between two crates of oranges, read the title of the wanted book upside down, remove it, close and lash and cover the box again. But if there had been a low table or a large bunk, it would have been perfect.

For many little errors like this, we have concluded that all collecting trips to fairly unknown regions should be made twice; once to make mistakes and once to correct them. Some of the greatest difficulty lies in the fact that previous collectors have never set down the equipment taken and its success or failure. We propose to rectify this in our account.

The library contained all the separates then available on the Panamic and Gulf fauna. Primary volumes such as Johnson and Snook, Ricketts and Calvin, Russell and Yonge, Flattely and Walton, Keep's *West Coast Shells*, Fisher's three-volume starfish monograph, the Rathbun brachyuran monograph, Schmitt's *Marine Decapod Crustacea of California*, Fraser's *Hydroids*, Barnhart's *Marine Fishes of Southern California*, *Coast Pilots* for the whole Pacific Coast; charts, both large and small scale, of the whole region to be covered.

The camera equipment was more than adequate, for it was never used. It included a fine German reflex and an 8-mm. movie camera with tripod, light meters, and everything. But we had no camera-man. During low tides we all collected; there was no time to dry hands and photograph at the collecting scene. Later, the anesthetizing, killing, preserving, and labeling of specimens were so important that we still took no pictures. It was an error in personnel. There should be a camera-man who does nothing but take pictures.

Our collecting material at least was good. Shovels, wrecking- and abalone-bars, nets, long-handled dip-nets, wooden fish-kits, and a number of seven-cell flashlights for night collecting were taken. Containers seemed to go endlessly into the hold of the *Western Flyer*. Wooden fish-kits with heads; twenty hard-fir barrels with galvanized hoops in fifteen- and thirty-gallon sizes; cases of gallon jars, quart, pint, eight-ounce, five-ounce, and two-ounce screw-cap jars; several gross of corked vials in four chief sizes, 100x33 mm., six-dram, four-

dram, and two-dram sizes. There were eight two-and-a-half-gallon jars with screw caps. And with all these we ran short of containers, and before we were through had to crowd those we had. This was unfortunate, since many delicate animals should be preserved separately to prevent injury.

Of chemicals, we put into the boat a fifteen-gallon barrel of U.S.P. formaldehyde and a fifteen-gallon barrel of denatured alcohol. This was not nearly enough alcohol. The stock had to be replenished at Guaymas, where we bought ten gallons of pure sugar alcohol. We took two gallons of Epsom salts for anesthetization and again ran out and had to buy more in Guaymas. Menthol, chromic acid, and novocain, all for relaxing animals, were included in the chemical kit. Of preparing equipment, there were glass chiton plates and string, lots of rubber gloves, graduates, forceps, and scalpels. Our binocular microscope, Bausch & Lomb A.K.W., was fitted with a twelve-volt light, but on the rolling boat the light was so difficult to handle that we used a spot flashlight instead. We had galvanized iron nested trays of fifteen- to twenty-gallon capacity for gross hardening and preservation. We had enameled and glass trays for the laying out of specimens, and one small examination aquarium.

The medical kit had been given a good deal of thought. There were nembutal, butesin picrate for sunburn, a thousand two-grain quinine capsules, two-percent mercuric oxide salve for barnacle cuts, cathartics, ammonia, mercurochrome, iodine, alcaroid, and, last, some whisky for medicinal purposes. This did not survive our leave-taking, but since no one was ill on the whole trip, it may have done its job very well.

[The authors then tell of their troubles with the balky Sea-Cow, an outboard motor used for coastal survey; their encounters with the myths of the sea and actual storms; the historical background of shore spots and scientific observations on marine specimens caught; and other human experiences ashore and afloat. Ricketts catalogues his finds; Steinbeck allows his mind to reflect on tiny incidents, on people, on ideas—the resulting potpourri is an unusual reading experience. A simple incident is here described.]

When we came back from the early morning collecting we sailed immediately for the port of Loreto. We were eager to see this town, for it was the first successful settlement on the Peninsula, and its church is the oldest mission of all. Here the inhospitability of Lower California had finally been conquered and a colony had taken root in the face of hunger and mishap. From the sea, the town was buried in a grove of palms and greenery. We dropped anchor and searched the shore with our glasses. A line of canoes lay on the beach and a group of men sat on the sand by the canoes and watched us; comfortable, lazy-looking men in white clothes. When our anchor dropped they got up and made for the town. Of course, they had to find their uniforms, and since Loreto was not very often visited and since the Governor had *not* recently been there, this may not have been so easy. There may have been some scurrying of errand-bound children from house to house, looking for tunics or belts or borrowing clean shirts. Señor the official had to shave and scent himself and

dress. It all takes time, and the boat in the harbor will wait. It didn't look like much of a boat anyway, but at least it was a boat.

One fine thing about Mexican officials is that they greet a fishing boat with the same serious ceremony they would afford the *Queen Mary*, and the *Queen Mary* would have to wait just as long. This made us feel very good and not rebellious about the port fees—absent in this case! We came to them and they made us feel, not like stodgy people in a purse-seiner but like ambassadors from Ultra-Marina bringing letters of greeting out of the distances. It is no wonder that we too scurried for clean shirts, that Tony put on his master's cap, and Tiny polished the naval insignia on his, which he had come by no doubt honorably in a washroom in San Diego. We were not smart, not very alert, but we were clean and we smelled rather delicious. Sparky sprinkled us with shaving lotion and we filled the air with an odor of flowers. If the *brazo*, the double embrace, should be indicated by any feeling of uncontrollable good-will, we were ready.

The men came back to the beach in their uniforms, paddled out, and we passed the ceremony of induction. Loreto was asleep in the sunshine, a lovely town, with gardens in every yard and only the streets white and hot. The young males watched us from the safe shade of the *cantina* and passed greetings as we went by, and a covey of young girls grew tight-faced and rushed around a corner and giggled. How strange we were in Loreto! Our trousers were dark, not white; the silly caps we wore were so outlandish that no store in Loreto would think of stocking them. We were neither soldiers nor sailors—the little girls just couldn't take it. We could hear their strangled giggling from around the corner. Now and then they peeked back around the corner to verify for themselves our ridiculousness, and then giggled again while their elders hissed in disapproval. And one woman standing in a lovely garden shaded with purple bougainvillaea explained, "Everyone knows what silly things girls are. You must forgive their ill manners; they will be ashamed later on." But we felt that the silly girls had something worthwhile in their attitude. They were definitely amused. It is often so, particularly in our country, that the first reaction to strangeness is fear and hatred; we much preferred the laughter. We don't think it was even unkind—they'd simply never seen anything so funny in their lives.

As usual, a good serious small boy attached himself to us. It would be interesting to see whether a nation governed by the small boys of Mexico would not be a better, happier nation than those ruled by old men whose prejudices may or may not be conditioned by ulcerous stomachs and perhaps a little drying up of the stream of love.

This small boy could have been an ambassador to almost any country in the world. His straight-seeing dark eyes were courteous, yet firm. He was kind and dignified. He told us something of Loreto; of its poverty, and how its church was tumbled down now; and he walked with us to the destroyed mission. The roof had fallen in and the main body of the church was a mass of rubble. From the walls hung the shreds of old paintings. But the bell-tower

was intact, and we wormed our way deviously up to look at the old bells and to strike them softly with the palms of our hands so that they glowed a little with tone. From here we could look down on the low roofs and into the enclosed gardens of the town. The white sunlight could not get into the gardens and a sleepy shade lay in them.

One small chapel was intact in the church, but the door to it was barred by a wooden grille, and we had to peer through into the small, dark, cool room. There were paintings on the walls, one of which we wanted badly to see more closely, for it looked very much like an El Greco, and probably was *not* painted by El Greco. Still, strange things have found their way here. The bells on the tower were the special present of the Spanish throne to this very loyal city. But it would be good to see this picture more closely. The Virgin Herself, Our Lady of Loreto, was in a glass case and surrounded by the lilies of the recently past Easter. In the dim light of the chapel she seemed very lovely. Perhaps she is gaudy; she has not the look of smug virginity so many have—the “I-am-the-Mother-of-Christ” look—but rather there was a look of terror in her face, of the Virgin Mother of the world and the prayers of so very many people heavy on her.

To the people of Loreto, and particularly to the Indians of the outland, she must be the loveliest thing in the world. It doesn't matter that our eyes, critical and thin with *good taste*, should find her gaudy. And actually we did not. We too found her lovely in her dim chapel with the lilies of Easter around her. This is a very holy place, and to question it is to question a fact as established as the tide. How easily and quickly we slide into our race-pattern unless we keep intact the stiff-necked and blinded pattern of the recent intellectual training.

We threw it over, and there wasn't much to throw over, and we felt good about it. This Lady, of plaster and wood and paint, is one of the strong ecological factors of the town of Loreto, and not to know her and her strength is to fail to know Loreto. One could not ignore a granite monolith in the path of the waves. Such a rock, breaking the rushing waters, would have an effect on animal distribution radiating in circles like a dropped stone in a pool. So has this plaster Lady a powerful effect on the deep black water of the human spirit. She may disappear and her name be lost, as the Magna Mater, as Isis, have disappeared. But something very like her will take her place, and the longings which created her will find somewhere in the world a similar altar on which to pour their force. No matter what her name is, Artemis, or Venus, or a girl behind a Woolworth counter vaguely remembered, she is as eternal as our species, and we will continue to manufacture her as long as we survive.

We came back slowly through the deserted streets of Loreto, and we walked quietly laden with submergence in a dim chapel.

[After various experiences with creatures of the sea and land, the authors find that scientific manuals and coastal charts are not always up-to-date; they also learn much about human beings, including themselves. A typical passage of narration and reflection follows.]

As we ascended the Gulf it became more sparsely inhabited; there were fewer of the little heat-struck *rancherías*, fewer canoes of fishing Indians. Above Santa Rosalia very few trading boats travel. One would be really cut off up here. And yet here and there on the beaches we found evidences of large parties of fishermen. On one beach there were fifteen or twenty large sea-turtle shells and the charcoal of a bonfire where the meat had been cooked or smoked. In this same place we found also a small iron harpoon which had been lost, probably the most valued possession of the man who had lost it. These Indians do not seem to have firearms; probably the cost of them is beyond even crazy dreaming. We have heard that in some of the houses are the treasured weapons of other times, muskets, flintlocks, old long muzzle-loaders kept from generation to generation. And one man told us of finding a piece of Spanish armor, a breastplate, in an Indian house.

There is little change here in the Gulf. We think it would be very difficult to astonish these people. A tank or a horseman armed cap-a-pie would elicit the same response—a mild and dwindling interest. Food is hard to get, and a man lives inward, closely related to time; a cousin of the sun, at feud with storm and sickness. Our products, the mechanical toys which take up so much of our time, preoccupy and astonish us so, would be considered what they are, rather clever toys but not related to very real things. It would be interesting to try to explain to one of these Indians our tremendous projects, our great drives, the fantastic production of goods that can't be sold, the clutter of possessions which enslave whole populations with debt, the worry and neuroses that go into the rearing and educating of neurotic children who find no place for themselves in this complicated world; the defense of the country against a frantic nation of conquerors, and the necessity for becoming frantic to do it; the spoilage and wastage and death necessary for the retention of the crazy thing; the science which labors to acquire knowledge, and the movement of people and goods contrary to the knowledge obtained. How could one make an Indian understand the medicine which labors to save a syphilitic, and the gas and bomb to kill him when he is well, the armies which build health so that death will be more active and violent. It is quite possible that to an ignorant Indian these might not be evidences of a great civilization, but rather of inconceivable nonsense.

It is not implied that this fishing Indian lives a perfect or even a very good life. A toothache may be to him a terrible thing, and a stomachache may kill him. Often he is hungry, but he does not kill himself over things which do not closely concern him.

A number of times we were asked, Why do you do this thing, this picking up and pickling of little animals? To our own people we could have said any one of a number of meaningless things, which by sanction have been accepted as meaningful. We could have said, "We wish to fill in certain gaps in the knowledge of the Gulf fauna." That would have satisfied our people, for knowledge is a sacred thing, not to be questioned or even inspected. But the Indian might say, "What good is this knowledge? Since you make a duty of it, what is its purpose?" We could have told our people the usual thing about

the advancement of science, and again we would not have been questioned further. But the Indian might ask, "Is it advancing, and toward what? Or is it merely becoming complicated? You save the lives of children for a world that does not love them. It is our practice," the Indian might say, "to build a house before we move into it. We would not want a child to escape pneumonia, only to be hurt all its life." The lies we tell about our duty and our purposes, the meaningless words of science and philosophy, are walls that topple before a bewildered little "why." Finally, we learned to know why we did these things. The animals were very beautiful. Here was life from which we borrowed life and excitement. In other words, we did these things because it was pleasant to do them.

We do not wish to intimate in any way that this hypothetical Indian is a noble savage who lives in logic. His magics and his techniques and his teleologies are just as full of nonsense as ours. But when two people, coming from different social, racial, intellectual patterns, meet and wish to communicate, they must do so on a logical basis. Clavigero discusses what seems to our people a filthy practice of some of the Lower California Indians. They were always hungry, always partly starved. When they had meat, which was a rare thing, they tied pieces of string to each mouthful, then ate it, pulled it up and ate it again and again, often passing it from hand to hand. Clavigero found this a disgusting practice. It is rather like the Chinese being ridiculed for eating twenty-year-old eggs who said, "Your cheese is rotten milk. You like rotten milk—we like rotten eggs. We are both silly."

Costume on the *Western Flyer* had degenerated completely. Shirts were no longer worn, but the big straw hats were necessary. On board we went barefoot, clad only in hats and trunks. It was easy then to jump over the side to freshen up. Our clothes never got dry; the salt deposited in the fibers made them hygroscopic, always drawing the humidity. We washed the dishes in hot salt water, so that little crystals stuck to the plates. It seemed to us that the little salt adhering to the coffee pot made the coffee delicious. We ate fish nearly every day: bonito, dolphin, sierra, red snappers. We made thousands of big fat biscuits, hot and unhealthful. Twice a week Sparky created his magnificent spaghetti. Unbelievable amounts of coffee were consumed. One of our party made some lemon pies, but the quarreling grew bitter over them; the thievery, the suspicion of favoritism, the vulgar traits of selfishness and perfidy those pies brought out saddened all of us. And when one of us who, from being the most learned should have been the most self-controlled, took to hiding pie in his bed and munching it secretly when the lights were out, we decided there must be no more lemon pie. Character was crumbling, and the law of the fang was too close to us.

One thing had impressed us deeply on this little voyage: the great world dropped away very quickly. We lost the fear and fierceness and contagion of war and economic uncertainty. The matters of great importance we had left were not important. There must be an infective quality in these things. We had lost the virus, or it had been eaten by the anti-bodies of quiet. Our pace

had slowed greatly; the hundred thousand small reactions of our daily world were reduced to very few. When the boat was moving we sat by the hour watching the pale, burned mountains slip by. A playful swordfish, jumping and spinning, absorbed us completely. There was time to observe the tremendous minutiae of the sea. When a school of fish went by, the gulls followed closely. Then the water was littered with feathers and the scum of oil. These fish were much too large for the gulls to kill and eat, but there is much more to a school of fish than the fish themselves. There is constant vomiting; there are the hurt and weak and old to cut out; the smaller prey on which the school feeds sometimes escape and die; a moving school is like a moving camp, and it leaves a camp-like debris behind it on which the gulls feed. The sloughing skins coat the surface of the water with oil.

At six P.M. we made anchorage at San Francisquito Bay. This cove-like bay is about one mile wide and points to the north. In the southern part of the bay there is a pretty little cove with a narrow entrance between two rocky points. A beach of white sand edges this cove, and on the edge of the beach there was a poor Indian house, and in front of it a blue canoe. No one came out of the house. Perhaps the inhabitants were away or sick or dead. We did not go near; indeed, we had a strong feeling of intruding, a feeling sharp enough even to prevent us from collecting on that little inner bay. The country hereabouts was stony and barren, and even the brush had thinned out. We anchored in four fathoms of water on the westerly side of the bay, then went ashore immediately and set up our tide stake at the water's edge, with a bandanna on it so we could see it from the boat. The wind was blowing and the water was painfully cold. The tide had dropped two feet below the highest line of barnacles. Three types of crabs were common here. There were many barnacles and great limpets and two species of snails, *Tegula* and a small *Purpura*. There were many large smooth brown chitons, and a few bristle-chitons. Farther down under the rocks were great anastomosing masses of a tube-worm with rusty red gills, some tunicates, *Astrometis*, and the usual holothurians.

Tiny found the shell of a fine big lobster, newly cleaned by isopods. The isopods and amphipods in their millions do a beautiful job. It is common to let them clean skeletons designed for study. A dead fish is placed in a jar having a cap pierced with holes just large enough to permit the entrance of the isopods. This is lowered to the bottom of a tide pool, and in a very short time the skeleton is clean of every particle of flesh, and yet is articulated and perfect.

The wind blew so and the water was so cold and ruffled that we did not stay ashore for very long. On board, we put down the baited bottom nets as usual to see what manner of creatures were crawling about there. When we pulled up one of the nets, it seemed to be very heavy. Hanging to the bottom of it on the outside was a large horned shark. He was not caught, but had gripped the bait through the net with a bulldog hold and he would not let go. We lifted him unstruggling out of the water and up onto the deck, and still he would not let go. This was at about eight o'clock in the evening. Wishing

to preserve him, we did not kill him, thinking he would die quickly. His eyes were barred, rather like goat's eyes. He did not struggle at all, but lay quietly on the deck, seeming to look at us with a baleful, hating eye. The horn, by the dorsal fin, was clean and white. At long intervals his gill-slits opened and closed but he did not move. He lay there all night, not moving, only opening his gill-slits at great intervals. The next morning he was still alive, but all over his body spots of blood had appeared. By this time Sparky and Tiny were horrified by him. Fish out of water should die, and he didn't die. His eyes were wide and for some reason had not dried out, and he seemed to regard us with hatred. And still at intervals his gill-slits opened and closed. His sluggish tenacity had begun to affect all of us by this time. He was a baleful personality on the boat, a sluggish, gray length of hatred, and the blood spots on him did not make him more pleasant. At noon we put him into the formaldehyde tank, and only then did he struggle for a moment before he died. He had been out of the water for sixteen or seventeen hours, had never fought or flopped a bit. The fast and delicate fishes like the tunas and mackerels waste their lives out in a complete and sudden flurry and die quickly. But about this shark there was a frightful quality of stolid, sluggish endurance. He had come aboard because he had grimly fastened on the bait and would not release it, and he lived because he would not release life. In some earlier time he might have been the basis for one of those horrible myths which abound in the spoken literature of the sea. He had a definite and terrible personality which bothered all of us, and, as with the sea-turtle, Tiny was shocked and sick that he did not die. This fish, and all the family of the Heterodontidae, ordinarily live in shallow, warm lagoons, and, although we do not know it, the thought occurred to us that sometimes, perhaps fairly often, these fish may be left stranded by a receding tide so that they may have developed the ability to live through until the flowing tide comes back. The very sluggishness in that case would be a conservation of vital energy, whereas the beautiful and fragile tuna make one frantic rush to escape, conserving nothing and dying immediately.

Within our own species we have great variation between these two reactions. One man may beat his life away in furious assault on the barrier, where another simply waits for the tide to pick him up. Such variation is also observable among the higher vertebrates, particularly among domestic animals. It would be strange if it were not also true of the lower vertebrates, among the individualistic ones anyway. A fish, like the tuna or the sardine, which lives in a school, would be less likely to vary than this lonely horned shark, for the school would impose a discipline of speed and uniformity, and those individuals which would not or could not meet the school's requirements would be killed or lost or left behind. The overfast would be eliminated by the school as readily as the overslow, until a standard somewhere between the fast and slow had been attained. Not intending a pun, we might note that our schools have to some extent the same tendency. A Harvard man, a Yale man, a Stanford man—that is, the ideal—is as easily recognized as a tuna, and he has, by a process of elimination, survived the tests against idiocy and

brilliance. Even in physical matters the standard is maintained until it is impossible, from speech, clothing, haircuts, posture, or state of mind, to tell one of these units of his school from another. In this connection it would be interesting to know whether the general collectivization of human society might not have the same effect. Factory mass production, for example, requires that every man conform to the tempo of the whole. The slow must be speeded up or eliminated, the fast slowed down. In a thoroughly collectivized state, mediocre efficiency might be very great, but only through the complete elimination of the swift, the clever, and the intelligent, as well as the incompetent. Truly collective man might in fact abandon his versatility. Among school animals there is little defense technique except headlong flight. Such species depend for survival chiefly on tremendous reproduction. The great loss of eggs and young to predators is the safety of the school, for it depends for its existence on the law of probability that out of a great many which start some will finish.

It is interesting and probably not at all important to note that when a human state is attempting collectivization, one of the first steps is a frantic call by the leaders for an increased birth rate—replacement parts in a shoddy and mediocre machine.

Our interest had been from the first in the common animals and their associations, and we had not looked for rarities. But it was becoming apparent that we were taking a number of new and unknown species. Actually, more than fifty species undescribed at the time of capture will have been taken. These will later have been examined, classified, described, and named by specialists. Some of them may not be determined for years, for it is one of the little by-products of the war that scientific men are cut off from one another. A Danish specialist in one field is unable to correspond with his colleague in California. Thus some of these new animals may not be named for a long time. . . .

There are some marine biologists whose chief interest is in the rarity, the seldom seen and unnamed animal. These are often wealthy amateurs, some of whom have been suspected of wishing to tack their names on unsuspecting and unresponsive invertebrates. The passion for immortality at the expense of a little beast must be very great. Such collectors should to a certain extent be regarded as in the same class with those philatelists who achieve a great emotional stimulation from an unusual number of perforations or a misprinted stamp. The rare animal may be of individual interest, but he is unlikely to be of much consequence in any ecological picture. The common, known, multitudinous animals, the red pelagic lobsters which litter the sea, the hermit crabs in their billions, scavengers of the tide pools, would by their removal affect the entire region in widening circles. The disappearance of plankton, although the components are microscopic, would probably in a short time eliminate every living thing in the sea and change the whole of man's life, if it did not through a seismic disturbance of balance eliminate all life on the globe. For these little animals, in their incalculable numbers, are probably the base food supply of the world. But the extinction of one of

the rare animals, so avidly sought and caught and named, would probably go unnoticed in the cellular world.

Our own interest lay in relationships of animal to animal. If one observes in this relational sense, it seems apparent that species are only commas in a sentence, that each species is at once the point and the base of a pyramid, that all life is relational to the point where an Einsteinian relativity seems to emerge. And then not only the meaning but the feeling about species grows misty. One merges into another, groups melt into ecological groups until the time when what we know as life meets and enters what we think of as non-life: barnacle and rock, rock and earth, earth and tree, tree and rain and air. And the units nestle into the whole and are inseparable from it. Then one can come back to the microscope and the tide pool and the aquarium. But the little animals are found to be changed, no longer set apart and alone. And it is a strange thing that most of the feeling we call religious, most of the mystical outcrying which is one of the most prized and used and desired reactions of our species, is really the understanding and the attempt to say that man is related to the whole thing, related inextricably to all reality, known and unknowable. This is a simple thing to say, but the profound feeling of it made a Jesus, a St. Augustine, a St. Francis, a Roger Bacon, a Charles Darwin, and an Einstein. Each of them in his own tempo and with his own voice discovered and reaffirmed with astonishment the knowledge that all things are one thing and that one thing is all things—plankton, a shimmering phosphorescence on the sea and the spinning planets and an expanding universe, all bound together by the elastic string of time. It is advisable to look from the tide pool to the stars and then back to the tide pool again.

[Then follow more vignettes of people and places, fishing adventures, observations on topography. The account, which runs to about 600 pages of narrative, appendices, and photographs, is leisurely, and the reader finds himself slowly acquiring familiarity with the authors, identity with their experiences. Here is a sample interlude.]

When once the engine started now, it would not stop until we reached San Diego. We were reluctant to go back. This balance in time is one of the very few occasions when we have the right of "yes" and "no," and even now the cards were stacked against "yes."

At last we picked up the collecting buckets and the little crowbars and all the tubes, and we rowed slowly back to the *Western Flyer*. Even then, we had difficulty in starting. Someone was overboard swimming in the beautiful water all the time. Tony and Tex, who had been eager to get home, were reluctant now that it was upon them. We had all felt the pattern of the Gulf, and we and the Gulf had established another pattern which was a new thing composed of it and us. At last, and with sorrow, Tex started the engine and the anchor came up for the last time.

All afternoon we stowed and lashed equipment, set the corks in hundreds of glass tubes and wrapped them in paper toweling, screwed tight the caps of jars, tied down the skiffs, and finally dropped the hatch cover in place. We

covered the bookcase with triple tarpaulin, and one last time overcame the impulse to throw the Sea-Cow overboard. Then we were under way, sailing southward toward the Cape. The swordfish jumped in the afternoon light, flashing like heliographs in the distance. We took back our old watches that night, and the engine drummed happily and drove us through a calm sea. In the morning the tip of the Peninsula was on our right. Behind us the Gulf was sunny and calm, but out in the Pacific a heavy threatening line of clouds hung.

Then a crazy literary thing happened. As we came opposite the Point there was one great clap of thunder, and immediately we hit the great swells of the Pacific and the wind freshened against us. The water took on a gray tone.

At three A.M. Pacific time we passed the light on the false cape and made our new course northward, and the sky was gray and threatening and the wind increased. The Gulf was blotted out for us—the Gulf that was thought and work and sunshine and play. This new world of the Pacific took hold of us and we thought again of an unseen person on the deckhouse, some kind of symbol person—to a sailor, a ghost, a premonition, a feeling in human form.

We could not yet relate the microcosm of the Gulf with the macrocosm of the sea. As we went northward the gray waves rolled up and the *Western Flyer* stubbed her nose into them and the white spray flew over us. The day passed and a new night came and the sea grew more stern. Now we plunged like a nervous horse, and no step could be taken without a steadying hand. The galley was in confusion, for a can of olive oil had leaped from its stand and flooded the floor. On the stove, the coffee pot slipped back and forth between its bars.

Over the surface of the heaving sea the birds flew landward, zigzagging to cover themselves in the wave troughs from the wind. The man at the wheel was the lucky one, for he had a grip against the pitching. He was closest to the boat and to the rising storm. He was the receiver, but also he was the giver and his hand was on the course.

What was the shape and size and color and tone of this little expedition? We slipped into a new frame and grew to be a part of it, related in some subtle way to the reefs and beaches, related to the little animals, to the stirring waters and the warm brackish lagoons. This trip had dimension and tone. It was a thing whose boundaries seeped through itself and beyond into some time and space that was more than all the Gulf and more than all our lives. Our fingers turned over the stones and we saw life that was like our life.

On the deckhouse we held the rails for support, and the blunt nose of the boat fought into the waves and the gray-green water struck us in the face. Some creative thing had happened, a real tempest in our small teapot minds. But boiling water still produces steam, whether in a watch-glass or in a turbine. It is the same stuff—weak and dissipating or explosive, depending on its use. The shape of the trip was an integrated nucleus from which weak strings of thought stretched into every reachable reality, and a reality which

reached into us through our perceptive nerve trunks. The laws of thought seemed really one with the laws of things. There was some quality of music here, perhaps not to be communicated, but sounding clear and huge in our minds. The boat plunged and shook herself, and rivers of swirling water ran down the scuppers. Below in the hold, packed in jars, were thousands of little dead animals, but we did not think of them as trophies, as things cut off from the tide pools of the Gulf, but rather as drawings, incomplete and imperfect, of how it had been there. The real picture of how it had been there and how we had been there was in our minds, bright with sun and wet with sea water and blue or burned, and the whole crusted over with exploring thought. Here was no service to science, no naming of unknown animals, but rather—we simply liked it. We liked it very much. The brown Indians and the gardens of the sea, and the beer and the work, they were all one thing and we were that one thing too.

The *Western Flyer* hunched into the great waves toward Cedros Island, the wind blew off the tops of the whitecaps, and the big guy wire, from bow to mast, took up its vibration like the low pipe on a tremendous organ. It sang its deep note into the wind.

LOUIS ADAMIC *One of the most interesting personalities among contemporary American writers is Louis Adamic, who was born (1899) in that corner of Yugoslavia known as Slovenia, a region which has clung tenaciously to its own language and culture. Coming to this country alone as an immigrant boy in his 'teens, he found himself in an alien world at variance with the stories he had heard of "the land of unlimited possibilities." In Laughing in the Jungle, he has written of the struggle of a sensitive, intelligent, and honestly critical mind to bridge the gap. The Native's Return (1932), a record of his first return to his native land, brought general recognition. Since then, he has devoted much of his time to the study of the problems of adjustment which face our foreign-born population. The following is taken from My Native Land (1943).*

LOVE IN SLOVENIA

IN MIDSRING 1932—only a few days but also ages ago—my wife and I came to Yugoslavia for a year's visit. In the early summer we stayed awhile at Bohin Lake, a beautiful place in the northern part of my native Slovenia.

Toward sundown one day we walked up the mountainside in back of the little hotel. Bathed in pungent pine scent, the path wound over protruding roots of great trees and among glacial boulders. We came to a knoll where

"Love in Slovenia," from *My Native Land* by Louis Adamic. Published by Harper & Brothers.

several trails met and trees had been cut to open a wide view of the lake. One trail led to Triglav, the highest and most famous mountain in Slovenia, in all of Yugoslavia.

The clearing on the knoll was full of an intense trembling light at once white and reddish, cool and warm, harsh and soothing. The sun would set any minute now; meantime except for the restless brilliancy the air and the forest were dead-still.

Stella and I sat on a stone under a low-hanging bough of a great hemlock at the clearing's edge and watched the lake below slip into shadow. Then we heard the sound of hurrying hob-nailed boots on the steep, gravelly Triglav trail . . . and a moment later a boy and a girl bounded into the refulgent shimmer and stopped short at the convergence of trails, where the knoll was highest and the view best.

Dazzled by the radiance, the youngsters did not see us; perhaps too we were partly concealed by the low-hanging hemlock branch.

The boy was hatless, with a shock of sun-bleached brown hair, rather tall, hard and thin as a rail. The girl's hair was dark, and she was a head shorter than he, quite small and also very thin. They had evidently been on a long tramp; the alpine sun had burnished their faces and naked forearms to a deep, lucent brown.

Their khaki clothes, loose on slender frames, were worn and faded. Stuck in a button-hole of the boy's shirt was a hawk's wing-feather. The girl's colored kerchief had slid down on her neck and there was an edelweiss in her hair. He carried a rucksack and a blanket-roll, she a rucksack and a binocular case.

Facing the lake and the sun, which put a rutilant sheen on their skin, they stood on that spot for possibly ten seconds without moving or saying a word. Then they abruptly faced each other and smiled strangely as though with a private understanding. And thus they remained for another few seconds.

The boy looked about fifteen and the girl a year or so younger. Later we learned they were both sixteen, going on seventeen. But there was a startling hint of maturity in their expressions as they gazed at each other. They were obviously not brother and sister. And the feeling between them was not adolescent infatuation, not calf love, but something almost grown-up, intransient, inevitable.

They were watching the setting sun's trembling light on each other's faces. Then the instant before shadow engulfed the knoll with the rest of the mountainside, the girl rose quickly, eagerly on her toes and the boy bent down a little and pressed his cheek briefly against hers.

I have never witnessed a more appealing scene or one more filled with drama. For a moment, rising on the tiniest ripple in the time-stream, the boy and the girl were the core of all meaning, the sudden and significant center of everything that lived and mattered.

Perhaps this knoll, this trails' crossing, had some special and secret importance for them at this hour of day. Perhaps it was Bohin Lake that was important and they had wanted to see it at sundown from the clearing. They

had run ahead to be alone there for half a minute: two slight figures on a spotlighted stage just before the spotlight dimmed out.

After the sun had set there were other footfalls coming down the steep rough end of the Triglav trail . . . and a middle-aged man, carrying a rucksack and a blanket-roll, emerged.

He smiled to the boy and the girl and said he hoped they would not be late for the bus. The young people smiled too and hurried ahead of him down the path on which Stella and I had come up.

After a while we followed them.

The man was Oton Zupanchich, Slovenia's foremost poet. He had been that in the early 1910's before I emigrated to America, and he still was, now in his mid-fifties; a lyrical poet, kin of Keats and Shelley, of Verhaeren and Verlaine, but scarcely known outside Europe and none too well there. He wrote in a language spoken by a nation of hardly two million, and in so intimate an idiom that adequate translation into other tongues, particularly the non-Slavic ones, is nearly impossible. Stella and I had first met him and his wife soon after our arrival in Yugoslavia. He was director of the state theater in Lublyana, the capital of Slovenia.

Lest the youngsters might suspect we had seen them on the knoll if we followed too closely, we strolled back to the hotel, but we got there before the departure of the bus whose station was directly in front. The passengers still stood about.

Oton Zupanchich greeted us warmly and said he knew we were staying here—had just inquired for us in the hotel. He introduced the girl as Bozha Ravnikhar and the boy as his son—by his nickname, Bah-tch. (I write it phonetically so that English-speaking tongues may approximate the Slovenian pronunciation.)

But there was no chance then for Stella and me to get acquainted with the young people. The driver called the passengers into the bus. Oton Zupanchich barely had time to ask us to visit them—they had a cottage at Bled Lake, a short ride from Bohin.

In the next two weeks we saw a good deal of the Zupanchiches and of little Bozha Ravnikhar, who was with them at Bled for the summer. And later during our stay in Yugoslavia we went several times to the poet's apartment in Lublyana where we also saw Bozha every time Bah-tch was home. They were inseparable.

Bah-tch I had known of before we met him. He was the original of "Ciciban" (Tsi-tsi-bahn), the mischievous birdlike boy-hero in a cycle of his father's poems for children which were popular all through Slovenia. And now we learned that he was also well known as a skillful swimmer and skier and an intrepid mountain-climber.

Part of this renown he shared with Bozha, his equal in boldness, physical aptness and stamina, if not in actual strength. In the last two years they had scaled some of the highest peaks in Slovenia, swum the width and length of

all the big lakes, ski'd down many dangerous slopes, and come to know intimately all the mountain regions in the country.

Observing the youngsters closely, it soon seemed to us that, while Bah-tch was very much the poet's son, Bozha was the poetry itself, a budding personification of the Slovenia of Zupanchich's lyric flights and discoveries. She was not pretty in the usual sense. A snapshot would show a plainness of contour and features. At times she was so withdrawn, so gathered in around the excitement inside her, as to seem subdued. Then Oton Zupanchich's hand, if he happened to be near, would reach out and touch her hair or hand, and she would come intensely alive, vivid as a bird, taking in everything about her, while Bah-tch's face would light up with wondering tenderness.

When Stella and I became acquainted with them, they had been in love for two years. Their attitude and manner toward each other had a fragrance one could not help breathing. And there was about them also a hard, sure shining young quality which presently we ventured to define as faith.

Youthful love-matches which reached into adulthood were not uncommon in Slovenia, and all who knew Bozha and Bah-tch believed that in time they would marry. They were a special young couple to many people. Their parentage no doubt had something to do with it. Bozha's father was not as influential in the life of Slovenia as Oton Zupanchich, but he was an eminent lawyer and a leading public figure in Lublyana, well known outside the city. But even more, the romantic aura about them existed because one was rarely seen without the other, and people had come to have a stake in them, in their entity. Their bright development was a promise to be kept. We never heard anyone refer to them separately, it was always "Bozha and Bah-tch."

They were classmates in a Lublyana gymnasium, whose curriculum is equivalent to that of the American high-school and junior college, plus required courses in Greek and Latin. In the autumn of '32 they started in the sixth class, having two more to go before *matura*, or graduation.

Their future was all laid out. They had laid it out themselves, and saw it as clearly ahead as any two young people could see their future in Slovenia or for that matter anywhere in Yugoslavia or the Balkans in '32.

They had chosen medicine. This was the field which they thought was most in need of people who wanted to work unselfishly, and which was most likely to permit them to work in that spirit.

They themselves of course never applied the word "unselfish" to their attitude and aim in life. Healthy and vital themselves, with an impulse to act, they wanted to—they *had* to get at disease, to prevent and heal. They did not think of themselves, did not scheme. There was no thought of position for position's sake, or income's.

Here was a paradox which interested me greatly. Their unselfishness gave them freedom to be utterly themselves—selfish in the most valid sense. It allowed them a mutual devotion, simultaneously mystical and simple, fierce and matter-of-fact. The deepening community of their interests was continually creative in the development of their characters and personalities.

The elder Zupanchiches were pleased from the start that Bah-tch and Bozha had decided to be doctors. Bozha's father had objected for a while. He had wanted Bozha to study law, but she couldn't. And so Lawyer Ravnikhar had reconciled himself to her going into medicine with Bah-tch. His friend Oton Zupanchich had helped win his approval, maintaining it was best to let the young people follow their own bent.

While unquestionably idealistic, Bozha and Bah-tch were tough-minded about what they wanted to do. Their ideas and viewpoints were similar, differing only in expression and color; they had come by most of them jointly.

One day we talked of rulers and politicians. They had no respect for them. Rulers and politicians, they thought, merely juggled human problems, they did not advance solutions. The best of them did little more than manipulate social ills and incongruities, the rest were referees in futility. Of course Bozha and Bah-tch knew only Yugoslav rulers and politicians, those in Slovenia at close hand, but they had a strong suspicion that what was true of them in Yugoslavia was true elsewhere.

Life in Slovenia, in Yugoslavia and the Balkans, they felt, called for a great deal of fundamental work on the part of those who by virtue of their advantages could presume to any sort of leadership. And they proposed to do what little they could a few years hence by devoting themselves to some aspect of the problem of ill health. The Slovenian nation was not among the worst off in Europe in this respect, but both on the land and in the cities too many people had improper or inadequate diet and too little medical attention. Bozha and Bah-tch believed that this before anything else kept people from developing their potentialities individually and collectively. They scorned the claim that health conditions in Slovenia were better than in parts of Italy and France. They asked how bad they were there.

Bozha and Bah-tch had avid far-ranging minds. In addition to their native tongue and Serbo-Croatian, which they knew fluently, they could also read—with lessening dependence on dictionaries—French, English, German, Czech, Polish and Russian. And they kept themselves informed about world events and trends. Since their special intellectual focus was on the health problem, they were excited and impressed by the progress in public health in Soviet Russia, and read with particular eagerness everything they got hold of pertaining to it. They were deeply interested in the great Russian scientist Pavlov, in his research in conditioned reflexes, in his whole magnificent approach to the mystery of life. Bah-tch thought off and on he might go into medical research. Bozha believed the application to masses of people of what was already known was even more urgent.

Their plans were tentatively worked out in considerable detail for ten years ahead. After completing gymnasium in '34, their medical training would require another six years and they meant to study two years each in Prague, Warsaw and the Soviet Union. Then in '41 they would return to Slovenia and go to work.

Their plans were tentative only because they did not know—no one knew

—when the next war would break out in Europe, in the world. They hoped to be professionally trained before then. They felt there was not much time.

After seeing them perhaps half a dozen times, Stella and I noticed with pleasure that Bozha and Bah-tch were beginning to accept us as friends. We were leaving Yugoslavia in a few months and suggested that they visit us in America some day; we would show them around. We meant to revisit Yugoslavia but didn't know just when. We promised each other to keep in touch.

One day about two months before we returned to America, Bozha and Stella, feeling suddenly very much drawn to each other, had a talk by themselves, mixing English and German. Bozha spoke passionately of Oton, as both she and Bah-tch habitually called the poet. She knew many of his verses by heart and was sorry Stella did not know Slovenian so she could read them.

She told her about one of the poems, "Advice to My Young Son," written when Bah-tch was ten, in which the poet-father urged his too-studious boy not to spend so much time bending over text books and worrying about exams lest he grow up pale and stoop-shouldered. He ought to go outdoors more, into the fields and villages and mountains and forests of Slovenia, to the lakes and rivers. It was wise to establish kinship with the birds and frogs and bugs and fishes, with creatures of all kinds, and with stones and trees and grasses and woods and flowers growing in low places and high, and with the earth itself and the people who lived close to it, and with their ways and tasks and tools. . . .

That poem, said Bozha, had greatly influenced Bah-tch and her, and thousands of other young people. Partly in consequence, they were spending all their spare time prowling through villages and hamlets, swimming in summer, ski'ing and skating and sleighing in winter, climbing mountains, spanning chasms with rope bridges, sleeping in shepherds' huts, in lean-tos and caves. Thousands knew every cave, cliff and ravine in the country. This gave them a new spirit, a clean boldness. And they loved Slovenia—consciously, with their eyes open—as no large number of Slovenians of any previous generation had loved it.

This was splendid, Bozha went on, but not enough. Now the poet's way and vision would have to be made concrete, definite, in the daily life of the Slovenian nation. For their part Bah-tch and she were going to do what they could by helping people out of the muck of illness.

Bozha's face glowed as she spoke of Oton and of the plans she and Bah-tch had made. Then she paused and a sharp change came over her. She looked much older than seventeen, sad and angry; her voice, exultant before, now was hard and precise:

"We are not the way we ought to be, the way we could be, we Slovenians. Our land is beautiful; so far as I know, there is no lovelier place on earth—but it's a trap. We live here, a small people surrounded by stronger nations, and we are trapped. Our spirit cannot really rise to match the wonder of

Bohin and Bled and Triglav, so we're not yet worthy of it. Some of us are such poor things.

"We have a thousand years of foreign misrule and oppression behind us. Right now four hundred thousand Slovenians are under Fascist rule in Italy. Our men have had to fight in dozens of wars through the centuries, not for themselves, but for people they had nothing in common with. And for a long time now there hasn't been enough to go around. There hasn't been enough to eat, and many Slovenians have gone away to North and South America. . . . Even people like us who are supposed to be well off have to pinch and scheme, so we can push toward our pitiful ambitions and 'make our careers' and acquire things that give us the illusion of security and 'standing' and 'culture.' . . . Yes, I know that this is pretty much true of all Europeans, probably of people everywhere, but it is more perhaps most true of us Slovenians, us Yugoslavs. There are so few of us, we can least afford it."

Then forcing a smile Bozha said: "I am sorry I talked like this. I didn't mean to. You are leaving Yugoslavia soon and I know we should not let you go with an unpleasant impression; but what I said is true, and you may as well know how some of us really feel. On the other hand, you must not think I did not mean what I said to you a minute ago. I did. It is splendid to be Yugoslav, to be Slovenian, to live here, now, even now, but it is also terrible. . . . Last week in Germany this man Hitler came to power—"

Nearly everybody we met in Yugoslavia who had any understanding of the Nazi idea was depressed by Hitler's rise.

As though thinking aloud, Bozha said, "A while ago Bah-tch and I were talking of the future—not our own specially but the future as a general idea. What is it? When does it begin? What is time? Does 'the future' really 'stretch ahead' of one? Bah-tch and I don't think so. We think it is right here, this moment, swirling about us. Are we just going to let it pile up around us, as the last generation let it pile up around them to become the past which weighs us down so much now? . . . Oh, curses, Bah-tch and I are not ready yet, we are so young, we have so much to learn."

One reason why our friendship with Bozha and Bah-tch grew so well was that roaming about Yugoslavia we frequently met Dr. Andriya Stampar, a big moon-faced Croatian whom I called "Doctor Hercules" and whom they admired intensely. They wanted to know everything about our meetings with him.

He had been Director of Public Health and Hygiene in the Ministry of Public Welfare in Belgrade from 1919 to '30, when King Alexander, on making himself Dictator of Yugoslavia, had removed him from that position so he would not develop too much power with the people. But before this had happened, Stampar—with some aid from the Rockefeller Foundation—had cleaned up typhus and malaria in the worst-afflicted regions of Yugoslavia. On every possible occasion, and for all the world to hear, he cried at the top of his voice that one of civilization's greatest crimes was offering the full benefit of the marvellous modern science of medicine to only some two per

cent of the earth's population. He was a fanatic, enormously energetic, very tough, one of those men who influence many and affect their era even if they are kept from fully realizing themselves.

Bozha and Bah-tch had never met him, had only seen him on lecture platforms, but they had all his official reports and had studied them carefully. In a way he almost outranked Oton in their estimation. They did not disagree with me when I said one day that Stampar was probably the most effective man Yugoslavia had produced. He "knew how." Two years before, shortly after discovering they were in love, they had written him about their decision to become doctors, and had received an answer. "Doctor Hercules" expressed his pleasure at their determination to go into medicine and hoped nothing would divert them from becoming "people's doctors."

They prized his letter very much.

Bozha and Bah-tch came to see us off at the station in Lublyana when we took the train for Trieste to return to America. In the next several years we had some letters, notes and cards from them—they usually signed them together. In turn, we wrote them briefly and sent them books and magazines. Occasionally, pressed between the sheets of their notepaper was an edelweiss, a field or forest flower, a beech or linden leaf. When we bought a little farm in the Delaware Valley in '37 Stella sent them leaves and blossoms from our place.

They were in Prague then, their second year in medical school. They wrote that the school was so good they had changed their plans somewhat and would stay in Czechoslovakia another year, possibly two; then try to enroll in the Warsaw University. They might not get a chance to study in Russia because Yugoslavia had no diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and they probably would finish their medical education in Belgrade.

During the summer and fall of the Munich crisis we did not hear from them—did not hear till the following spring after Hitler had seized Czechoslovakia. Then a note came from Warsaw in Bozha's handwriting:

"Do you remember, Stella, how bitterly I spoke to you a few weeks before you and Louis left Yugoslavia? Bah-tch and I feel that way more than ever. Our worst misfortunes are yet to come—our Calvary. I mean Slovenia's, Yugoslavia's, Europe's. . . . Hitler. . . . He is as clever as he is evil. He is getting so strong because he understands the rest of the European rulers and politicians, the Chamberlains and Daladiers, the crowd in striped trousers, all the manipulators of weakness and evil. . . ."

Six months later Hitler attacked Poland. And the next letter came the following Christmas. They had barely escaped alive from Warsaw. They were twenty-three. Bah-tch was due to go into the Yugoslav army service but he would probably be deferred till he got his medical degree. They were at the University of Belgrade and expected to graduate in February '41. "And then—?" But there was no use looking ahead—the war was certain to spread and engulf Yugoslavia and upset every plan.

This was the last letter, but two more postcards came—one from Bohin

(a picture of the lake) in the summer of '40, the other at Christmas the same year from Belgrade.

When Yugoslavia was overwhelmed in the spring of '41 Stella and I kept thinking of Bozha and Bah-tch. Were they in Belgrade that Palm Sunday when the Stukas struck? Or had they already returned to Slovenia?

In the autumn of '41 a number of Yugoslav refugees, having escaped from the Balkans about the time of the invasion, reached New York; among them a family from Lublyana who knew the Zupanchiches and the Ravnikhars. They told us that Bozha, "tiny as ever," and Bah-tch had received their degrees in February. But that was all they knew—except one very significant thing, which concerned more than those two.

That summer of '40, the summer we had received the picture postcard of Lake Bohin, Bozha and Bah-tch had spent their vacation-time with a group of young people in the mountains of Slovenia. They had practiced shooting and had surveyed the more or less inaccessible spots—caves, cliffs, peaks, chasm ledges—which would be advantageous for guerrilla warfare should Yugoslavia be taken over by the Axis with the aid of Prince-Regent Paul's appeasement regime in Belgrade, or should the country be conquered outright.

Several such groups, we were told, had been working all over Slovenia since Hitler's occupation of Austria, which had brought the Nazis within a half-hour's drive of Bohin and Bled. Some of them called themselves the Dead Guards. They were devotees of outdoor sports, young men and girls in their late teens and twenties, students and intellectuals, the sort Bozha must have had in mind when she told Stella about Oton Zupanchich's poem "Advice to My Young Son." They made caches of food, guns, ammunition, rope, clothing, shoes, medical supplies.

In the spring of '42 (through a channel known to appropriate United States officials) I began to get reports of widespread Slovenian guerrilla operations which had commenced, it seemed, eight or nine months earlier both against the Germans, who occupied northern Slovenia, and the Italians, who held the rest of it including Lublyana. A while later news of these operations, as part of the general Yugoslav resistance, started to appear in the American press, datelined Berne and London, where correspondents were getting hold of facts and rumors from various sources.

Stella and I tried to imagine what Bah-tch and Bozha were doing. Practicing medicine in Lublyana? Hardly. Putting up with Fascist occupation? Tolerating the old-line politicians, several of whom had gone to Rome to be received by Mussolini and the King of Italy? Impossible. The fiber of their characters was such that they were bound to be somewhere with the guerrillas who called themselves Partisans or "the Liberation Front."

In the last half of '42 I continued to receive reports of Partisan operations in the rural, especially the mountainous, regions of occupied Slovenia. In the part of the country held by the Italians there appeared to be some twenty or thirty thousand guerrillas, who were keeping several Fascist divisions busy.

But some of the stories which reached me in December '42 told of the

destruction of many Partisan units. In some cases the Fascist army commanders were aided by members of a Slovenian organization called the White Guards, agents of the old-time Slovenian politicians, who for the sake of their own postwar future, could not tolerate the development of this new military-political movement; they preferred to collaborate with the occupation.

There were accounts too of mass executions by the Italian army of whole companies and platoons of seized Partisans; and captured guerrillas were tortured, whether wounded or unwounded, in order to elicit information about other Partisan units. The tortured prisoners usually died.

I learned that Dr. Andriya Stampar was in a Nazi concentration camp in Austria. There was no news of Oton Zupanchich.

Bozha and Bah-tch—

Glancing through *The New York Times* on January 23, '43, I saw a dispatch by its London correspondent, C. L. Sulzberger, which had to do with guerrilla warfare in Yugoslavia some five months before. In the second paragraph I came upon a reference to "a lady doctor named Ravnikhar." Her first name was not given, but it could only be Bozha. A few days later I received a report through my usual channel which removed all possible doubt and gave some details that had not appeared in Mr. Sulzberger's story.

In midsummer of '42 Bozha was twenty-six years old. She was a doctor in the Slovenian Partisan forces, in charge of a hospital located in a mountain cave. The mouth of the cave was on the brink of a chasm.

One day a large Italian patrol suddenly appeared near her position, obviously intent upon capturing the cave. She opened fire on the enemy, but soon realized her situation was hopeless.

Bozha stopped shooting and ran into the cave, and before the patrol reached the mouth of it, she killed her Partisan patients who had been wounded in action during the previous weeks. Then she reappeared, paused for an instant on the brink of the chasm, and leapt into it.

This is all that has come out of night-shrouded Slovenia about the incident.

We in America who knew Bozha can only surmise. If she shot her Partisan patients, no doubt they had authorized and even begged her to kill them. They all knew that if they fell into enemy hands they would be tortured for information or be murdered outright. And Bozha must have leapt into the chasm for the same reason.

Perhaps there was also another reason. In the report there is no mention of Bah-tch. Was he among her patients? Or had he and Bozha been separated? Had he been killed before? We in America who knew them can only ask these questions and wait for answers. . . .

[. . .] the larger question will face us all. Bozha and Bah-tch kept their promise as well as they could. But we—shall we let the old manipulators of misfortune, the referees of futility, invalidate their faith, youth and sacrifice? Or shall we give Bozha's leap another meaning—a flight into the future?

LINCOLN STEFFENS (1866-1936) *can probably best be discovered by reading his own Autobiography (1931). Nevertheless, a few pertinent facts may help the student who first comes upon the name of Steffens in these pages. Our author was born in San Francisco and spent his boyhood in and near Sacramento. After early educational frustration, he eventually graduated from the University of California in 1889. There followed, in rapid succession, a three-year period of study and growth abroad (Berlin, Heidelberg, Leipzig, the Sorbonne); a spell of reporting for the New York Post (he later became city editor); and a widening experience with other papers and contributions to magazines. Steffens' probing nature eventually led to a sustained program of "muck-raking" which involved exposing of, and writing about, various existing evils in some of our larger cities. In addition to the Autobiography, the first half of which hits the average student's own problems, Shame of the Cities (1904) may serve as a sample of Steffens' creed, work, and style.*

BERLIN AND HEIDELBERG

I ARRIVED in Berlin in the summer of 1889. I had a small room in the Artillerie Strasse back of the university, and there I had been exercising my college German on the landlady and her son and reading up on my courses, choosing my professors, etc. Ethics was my subject, but I was not intending to study it directly. I would hear and read the men who taught it. I must know what they knew or thought or believed, but I had learned enough of their doctrines to feel pretty sure that they were not scientific; they did not have what I sought; a basis, probably in some other science, for a science of behavior. I was to start, therefore, with pure philosophy and ethics; metaphysics would be my main *Fach*, but all I wanted of it was a lead into other sciences.

Scientists were already discovering that the old, classical categories of knowledge were a hindrance. Physicists were forced into chemistry and back through mathematics to physics. But the German universities, like Berkeley, like all universities, were organized as they still are, not for inquiry and research into the unknown but for the learning (and teaching) of the known. They are scholarly, not scientific, and if I were to take a degree I must choose my categories and stick to them. I had no thought of, I had nothing but scorn for, degrees, but when I appeared for matriculation, I had to pretend to a candidacy; so I announced myself out for a Ph.D., with philosophy for my major subject, art history and economics for seconds.

The procedure of matriculation had one surprise for me. When I presented my precious papers at the Secretariat, the clerks took my passport, but they looked askance at my bachelor's diploma.

"Berlin and Heidelberg," from *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*. Copyright, 1931, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

"What's that?" asked one of them, and I told him.

"Oh, an American Doktorat!" he said. "It's worthless here. All we require is the passport," and he scribbled off the data he needed from it, gave me a form to fill out and my receipts for fees paid, and said he would deliver later my certificate of matriculation, an enormous calfskin Latin document.

He despised my degree as much as I did his, and I was hurt, with cause. I had worked, sacrificed my interests—I had cheated for that worthless baccalaureate. My cheating had been open at Berkeley. I had said that I would not half study the subjects that did not interest me and that, since they were required for a degree, which I (thought I) had to have to continue my studies abroad, I would cram for and sneak through the examinations in them. One professor, Colonel Edwards, who heard what I had threatened to do, sent for me and asked me how I could justify such conduct. I told him. His subject was conic sections. I said I did not want to know it, couldn't make head or tail of it myself, and that he, as a teacher, had failed to show me what it was all about. "It's just one of the many things," I said, "in which I find I have to submit to force; so I'll pretend to conform, but I won't really."

Pondering a moment, he asked me if I could prove any propositions. "Yes," I said, "some seven or eight. I know them by heart."

"All right," he said. "I don't want you to cheat; I won't let you cheat. I'll give you a private examination right now. You do two out of three propositions and I'll give you a pass."

Going to the blackboard, he wrote up one. "Can you do that?" I said I could. He wrote another. "That too?"

"No," I said, and he wrote another that I did not know.

"We'll make it three out of five," he suggested, and he wrote up one more and looked at me. I laughed and nodded; I could do it, and slowly he chose the fifth, which I knew. I wrote them out in a few minutes, handed them in, and—he passed me, after a long and very serious lecture on ethics, which I told him was to be my specialty. I was going to Germany on purpose to find out if there was any moral reason for or against cheating in cards, in politics, or in conic sections—"either by the student or the professor," I added.

And it was all in vain. I had been graduated (at the bottom of my class) at this cost, and I did not have to pass at all; I did not have to be a philosophic bachelor; all I had to have to enter the German and the French universities was my American citizenship, which I was born with. And so it was after I had entered. I did not have to work; no one knew or cared whether I heard my lectures or played my time away. There was the university, with its lectures, laboratories, professors, and workers. You could take all or nothing. I was free to study what and when and as my interest dictated, and the result was that I worked hard. I read everything, heard everybody, in my courses and in others. Whenever the students spoke well of a man who had anything to say on any subject, I took some of his lectures, but I held to my own trail of research for an ethics that was not merely a rationalization of folkways and passing laws, forms, and customs; taking for pleasure only

music, lots of music, and staged literature, except a few weeks of nights at the poker table in the back room of the Café Bauer.

With the Black Forest behind it and the Neckar River running through it to the Rhine, Heidelberg is a place of temptation and pleasure, and this wise old university was no spoilsport. All the lectures were on the four working days of the week, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, leaving the week-end long and clear for play. Many students go there for fun. I met an American corps student who had been fighting and drinking and idling so long there that he could hardly rally his English to talk with me.

"I must quit this, go to some other university and work," he said when we parted. I had reminded him of some old drowned purpose.

I went to Heidelberg to hear Kuno Fischer, the most eloquent if not the most apostolic of the professors of Hegel's philosophy, and I studied hard with him. Other subjects also I took, continuing my Berlin courses in art history and economics. My semester at Heidelberg was a fruitful season, but it bore flowers too. I made some friends there, and together we had all the fun that was going, in the town, on the river, in the Forest—beer-drinking, dancing, swimming and boating, walking, talking, and exploring the world and one another.

My room was up on the *Anlage*, just above the city park in a little house kept by a Viennese woman who in turn was kept by a local merchant. Her gay days were over; she was a good old mother to her two children and altogether contented with her condition of dependence upon the honor of the gentleman who had "married a lady" and was devoted to her, his proper wife. He only paid, but he paid regularly for his past sins. His old mistress did not regret hers; she loved to talk about them. She took me in as her one lodger to make a little extra money out of the front room, which her small family did not need. An expressive woman with a common story, lived and seen from her Viennese point of view, she served lively entertainment and some light upon ethics with all the meals that I took in my room. These were not many.

Kuno Fischer gave his first lecture, logic, at seven o'clock in the morning; no time for more than a hot cup of coffee at home with a piece of bread, which I finished often as I finished dressing on the way down to the university. Other students also showed signs of haste at 7:15, when, on the dot, the professor began his lecture with a smile for the breathless state of his hearers and the imperfect arrangement of collars and ties. I saw some fellows in slippers, pajamas, and overcoats, looking up with admiration at the professor, neat, composed, and logical. And eloquent; I missed taking many a note to sit and listen to Kuno Fischer's poetical prose. Few Germans can either speak or write German—well. Their language is too rich, variable, and unripe for them. Only the masters can master it, and Kuno Fischer, handsome and intelligent, was a master of German as he was of his own thinking in it. I asked him once how it came that he spoke German so well.

He had a habit which I had of going from his first lecture to the river for a swim. Sometimes we walked together down to the floating bath-house, and many a pleasant talk we had on the way. He chatted as he lectured, in short, clear, incisive sentences, and he liked it that I liked his style. It was by way of a jesting compliment that I put to him my question: "Herr Geheimrat, wie kommt es dass Sie so schön deutsch sprechen?"

"It's because I speak English," he answered in English, and, laughing, he reminded me that Goethe, asked once the same question, replied that his best German was written in the period when he was soaking in French.

After the swim I had breakfast in some café or beer hall, where I completed my notes; then more lectures till one o'clock. The noon meal was usually with some crowd of students in a restaurant, under the stiff forms of the student ritual, the gossip, the controversies, the plans for excursions or fights. Once a week I had an art history course which took us up to the castle to examine the stones and trace their periods, or off to the excavations near by, as far as Wiesbaden. Other days there were other lectures or library work or home study till along about four, when I went forth either to the Schloss or to some other café for coffee or to the river for a paddle. The boatman had several canoes, "left by the English," he said.

Just above the bridge the river is artificially narrowed and deepened, making a rapid, called the Hart Teufel, for about an eighth of a mile, and it's a struggle to paddle up it. I used to do it for exercise and then drive the little craft on up the easy, broad river to some one of the many garden restaurants along shore. After a bath out in the stream, I had an appetite which made the good cooking seem perfect, and a thirst which took beer as the Hart Teufel took water. There was always some other loose student to join in for a long, slow supper and a long, highbrow conversation. When the darkness fell, there was the canoe to lie in and the river to float me effortlessly back to town. I could philosophize in the dark; if there was a moon I could romance. Pleasant days, those lonely Heidelberg days. Pleasanter still the friendly days that followed.

Once, when the art history professor had his class out for field work on some ruin or other, a tall young German came up to me, struck his heels together, saluted stiffly, and said: "My name is Johann Friedrich Krudewolf. I am a German; I take you for an American. I want to learn English. I propose to exchange with you lessons in German for lessons in English."

I closed the foolish bargain, and we shook hands on it. There was one lesson in English, one in German, and no more. I did not have to study German; I was learning it fast enough by absorption, and I think now that while he did want to learn English, he was really seeking a friend. Anyhow we became so interested in each other that the conversation, even at the first and last lesson, ran away from the purpose and, of course, ran into the language easiest for both of us to understand. Bad as my German was then, it was so much better than his school English that we always spoke German and soon forgot lessons. His specialty was art history, and I was glad of that; Hegel's history of art gave a philosophic meaning to the subject, and

my new friend's interest in the details filled in beautifully my efforts to feel art both in itself and as a border of flowers along the course of our civilization.

Our excursions with the class to churches, castles, and ruins were pleasant recreations for me, so pleasant that we made study trips by ourselves for fun. We foot-toured the Black Forest three days at a time, always to see things Krudewolf wished to examine for art history reasons, but his notes told by the way and the ruined castles illustrated vividly the history of the rise of great German families from robbers to robber knights, to military and social power, to riches, position, and honors. That was the way it was done of old, and I made notes on morals as studiously as my companion did on art.

The best excursion we made, however, was for its own sake. The Neckar River was navigable up to Heilbron, and a curious kind of boat-train operated on it, the *Schlepper*. There was a cable laid in the middle of the stream. The power boat picked up this cable, pulled itself up on it, and passed it out over the stern. By this means the tuglike *Schlepper* schlepped a string of cargo boats up the Neckar to Heilbron and back down to the Rhine. Johann hired a rowboat and sent it on the *Schlepper* up to Heilbron, whither we went by train to meet it. A day and a night in funny old Heilbron, with its old, old stories, and we set out in the rowboat to row (or float) home to Heidelberg. We started early one morning, meaning to go far that day, but by ten o'clock we were passing such tempting restaurants in river gardens that we yielded, stopped and had breakfast, which we thought would do for lunch, too. But we could not pass by the resorts that called to us; we had to see some of them. We chose one for luncheon, a long luncheon, and when we embarked again, chose others here, there, everywhere for beer, coffee, or—something. We could not row; it was a waste, and—even drifting was too fast.

The Neckar, from Heilbron to Heidelberg, is one of the most beautiful stretches of country that I have ever seen—or it seemed so to me then. We stayed our first night at a village inn on the river bank, and while we dined made two important discoveries. This was a *Shaumwein* (champagne) country, with the "fizz" at seventy-five cents the bottle; and this season was a church festival at which everybody drank, danced, and made love. We danced till midnight that night and then took some peasant girls out rowing in our boat. We got away late the next morning and were stopped everywhere by pretty places for coffee or wine or meals or historical sights that Johann had to investigate. We didn't make five miles the second day. That night we danced—every night we danced, and we began to get away later and later in the mornings. We were ten days making a distance that one might have rowed in three or four, and then felt and wondered that we had done so beautiful a journey so fast. And I wonder now that I have never gone back, as I declared and have always been sure that I would "some day," to do the Neckar over again in a rowboat slowly—two or three weeks of it.

Toward the end of the semester a friend of mine, Carlos J. Hittell, came over from Munich to visit me. He was an art student from California. I had known well his brother Franklin at Berkeley; his father, Theodore H. Hittell, the historian, had had more to do with my education than many a teacher.

A retired attorney, he had turned to the writing of history, especially of California. He used to work on the dining-room table after dinner while I, his children and their friends, talked as youth will, finally and positively, of all sorts of things. Once he kept me when the others left, and he went into my mind and broke all the idols he found there. He was rough.

"You can't learn if you know everything already," he said. "You can't have a free mind if it's full of superstitions." And he whanged away. I took it pretty well, and because I came back for more, he continued to destroy my images. Every time I went to the house, whether to dinner, to call on his daughter, Catherine, or to sing songs with his sons, he lay for me and drew me into talk and some reading in his good library. A great service this fine old man rendered me. And his son, Carlos, did me another.

When Carlos joined me at Heidelberg, he completed our trio, one student of art history, one of ethics and philosophy, and one of the real thing, art. We played, walking, rowing, swimming, and touring, but also we talked, and the artist, without knowing or meaning it, spoke as one having authority. Johann and I listened to the man who was doing what we were merely reading and thinking about. We saw what the artist had told me at Berkeley, that we were getting scholarship about art, not art. But, like that other artist, Carlos Hittell could not express in our medium, words, what he was doing or trying to do when he was painting. We must go and be with art students when they were at work in their studios and see if we could—not hear, but see what art is. When the semester was over, therefore, we all went to Munich to study art instead of art history. No more Heidelberg for either of us.

And no more philosophy for me. There was no ethics in it. I had gone through Hegel with Kuno Fischer, hoping to find a basis for an ethics; and the professor thought he had one. I had been reading in the original the other philosophers whom I had read also in Berkeley, and they, too, thought they had it all settled. They did not have anything settled. Like the disputing professors at Berkeley, they could not agree upon what was knowledge, nor upon what was good and what evil, nor why. The philosophers were all prophets, their philosophies beliefs, their logic a justification of their—religions. And as for their ethics, it was without foundation. The only reasons they had to give for not lying or stealing were not so reasonable as the stupidest English gentleman's: "It isn't done."

This was my reluctant, disappointed conclusion, arrived at after a waste of a couple of good years of conscientious work. I must leave the philosophers and go to the scientists for my science of ethics as I must go to the artists for art. I said good-bye to the good kept woman who had kept me so comfortable. She accepted my departure as she accepted everything.

"Men come and men go," she said cheerfully.

"Always?" I asked.

"They don't always come," she laughed, "but always they go, always."

"And that's all there is of it?"

"All? Nay," she protested, pointing to her two. "For me there are always the children, thank God."

IRWIN EDMAN¹

M. PLATON

YOU HAD better come with us to Italy," said my friends as I left them at Vézelay, where the grandiose Abbaye and its superb spaces and capitals and the June weather and the pleasures of reunion (I had been away a year) had given us a very good time together.

"No, I have made up my mind to see Autun," I insisted. "There's a fine Romanesque cathedral there." And I began to recite its simple unadorned charm, its historical importance, the beauty of the surrounding country, the Roman theatre where the Comédie Française came to play in the summer. I had been reading the *Guide Bleu* with care.

I knew I had made no mistake even before seeing the cathedral, for the Hôtel St.-Louis was one of those inns on the Continent which make one find a reason for staying in a town longer than one had intended. It was then well over a hundred years old; they show you the room where Napoleon slept. It has an inner courtyard where the stage-coaches and carriages used to draw up. My room under the eaves seemed singularly homelike and comfortable and had a bath, which Napoleon's room did not. I arrived late in the afternoon and had a glimpse of the cathedral before dark. The *Guide Bleu* had not exaggerated. I took a walk out of town through rolling green country that reminded me at once of the Cotswolds and of Vermont. "This," I said to myself, "is just the place to stay for a couple of weeks of reading and writing."

I was sure of it that night at dinner. Apparently Autun was now on one of the main motor roads to the South, and for all its sleepy, comforting isolation had a good deal of passing tourist traffic. The *cuisine* was *renommée*. So was the wine. I was lonely without my friends and drank considerable of it. I felt wonderful. "Why did nobody tell me of Autun before?" I thought as I was falling asleep.

Next morning I wished I had never heard of it. The *cuisine renommée*, the *vin superbe*, had done for me. I was sure I had ptomaine poisoning. I asked the *valet de chambre* to send the friendly manager, whom the evening before I had complimented on his food, his wine, his country, and the room that Napoleon had slept in.

"Is it," I said wanly when he appeared, "that there is a doctor in Autun?"

"But yes, monsieur," he said briskly. "M. Platon."

"But you are joking, monsieur, *c'est de la blague*, not really M. Platon."

"M. Platon," from *Philosopher's Holiday*. Copyright 1938 by Irwin Edman. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press Inc., New York.

¹ See p. 286 for biographical sketch of Irwin Edman.

Even though I had ptomaine poisoning, I wouldn't believe there was anybody named Plato in a French provincial town.

"Yes, M. Platon," the innkeeper said simply, "an excellent family physician; he has attended my own family for twenty years now; a physician of the first order."

"Send M. Platon," I said weakly, wondering whether ptomaine poisoning was fatal. I remembered that Aristotle, anyway, was a physician and that there was a good deal about the humours of the body in Plato; and a physician, Erixymachus, appears in one of the dialogues. Maybe this Platon chap was all right after all.

Twenty minutes later—I was growing more and more sure it was ptomaine poisoning—I heard a hearty voice down the corridor. "*Alors*, where is the American?" The voice sounded almost threatening. Perhaps these provincial doctors still believed in blood-letting.

There entered my room not the diminutive Frenchman I had somehow expected but a tall, heavy man with bushy hair and eyebrows (he turned out to have originated in the Basque country); very brisk and energetic in his movements and an impatient firmness in his eye. He looked not at all like the busts of Plato, though he did have a broad brow.

"If you will permit me, sir," he said, and, much to my surprise, took from my table some galley-proofs of the *Journal of Philosophy* that I had hoped to read in the course of the morning. *Journal of Philosophy* was printed at the top of each galley.

"English," he said, pointing accusingly to the innocent words, "is simply French badly spelt. I do not, monsieur, speak English, or, as I could easily demonstrate, not very well. I do not read it very well either. But I read it well enough to see that English is simply French badly spelt and badly pronounced, and badly constructed. *Journal de la Philosophie, n'est-ce pas?* Monsieur, I am a philosopher not only in name but in nature. You must translate that article for me. It seems to be something that concerns the esthetic. Is it, perhaps, your own?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Then all the more reason: translate it for me at once."

"But, doctor, I am not feeling very well," I protested. Sight translation, or second sight translation, of even one's own prose in the midst of an attack of ptomaine poisoning was not a project that captured my imagination for the moment. Yet M. Platon looked menacing, and, after all, the request was an unexpected compliment from an unexpected source.

The doctor sat down by my bedside and I proceeded in a feeble voice—and, I fear, rather feeble French—to translate my ideas, which had, as I remember it, something to do with the relations of poetry and philosophy. M. Platon listened attentively. At the end of the third galley, I looked up, hoping for a respite.

"Continue, monsieur, there are points on which I do not agree, but it is well written." (I was vaguely reminded of meetings of the Philosophy Club to

which I belong and where I had heard that sort of thing from polite fellow-members.)

There were five galleys and I was not allowed to stop until I had translated them all.

"You have certain nuances of construction that are not exactly French," he said, "but on the whole you have done very well. Your article itself is good, especially considering the fact that you based your whole analysis on English poetry."

"And what, may I ask, is wrong with English poetry?" I asked, rather sharply.

"The English," he said, "are not poets. Not real poets," he insisted with conviction.

"Not real poets!" I said. "Surely you cannot have read them and say that. Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth—the light that never was, on sea or land . . ."

"Precisely," he said, "the light that never was on sea or land. English poets are always in the *vagues*; they never know exactly what they are saying, or know how to say exactly what they mean. *Voilà*, the light that never was on sea or land—light that is not, that is nothing, that is nowhere. Whereas a French poet has the precise epithet for the specific thing, the unique word for the unique emotion. A French poet is an artist cutting images like marble. An English poet is a dreamer who has not learned how to speak, or to make clear what he is saying. . . . Are you feeling better now?"

As a matter of fact, I was, except for a sense of moral outrage, but I thought it not prudent to admit it quite or quite yet.

"Well, I am feeling a little better, doctor, but there's something that has disturbed my digestion."

"Look here, my friend," he said, "that will pass. I shall take care of that. But there are more important considerations than your digestion that I wish to speak of first. *Tenez*, when I was called here by the director of the hotel—a very good fellow, by the way—I was a little annoyed, for, frankly, I have much to do today. The sick have no consideration of a doctor's convenience and they have all chosen this week to be sick at once. I said to myself: 'Of course, an American tourist, who has not the equipment to, or the education to, digest our excellent French food.' I did not look forward to the prospect of seeing you. But, sir, you are a humanist, an itinerant humanist. I am a humanist, too, but, alas, my profession keeps me here in Autun where there are very few. Now, had you arrived in this city in the Middle Ages, it would have been clear at once that you were a humanist. You would have worn a special costume; you would have spoken Latin. All the world would have known you were a humanist and you would at once have had access to the humanists of Autun—there are probably half a dozen and you shall now know them all. As it is, to whom have you spoken; to whom would you have spoken, if this wretched digestion of yours had not brought me by sheer accident to your bedside? Monsieur, there should be formed a Society of Itinerant Humanists—you and I will found it now—so that in the future when a cultivated gentleman arrives

anywhere in the world he will at once be welcomed by his fellows and his peers. It will add to the interchange of ideas; it will bring kindred spirits into contact; it will prevent such as you from moving through France as if it were merely a picture book. I shall now make the usual examination, ask you the usual questions, make out the usual prescription (I think I could do it safely without the examination or the questions), and call upon you tomorrow when I expect you to be well. Then you must dine with me and, later in the week, meet one of our fellow-humanists. Do not thank me; it is in just this way that our proposed Society of Itinerant Humanists will function in the future. It is a pity that Latin is no longer the international language; *hélas*, not everyone speaks French, though they should. It is the language of the mind and, I may add, of the soul."

He asked his questions, he made his examination, he made out his prescription and hastily rose to depart. . . . I could not resist thanking him, or asking him how he came to be called Platon.

"It is the name of my father," he said brusquely and, picking up his satchel, departed.

I saw a good deal of M. Platon the next week or two. As he had predicted, in a day or two I was better; even before his examination I was already convinced that it was not ptomaine poisoning.

My third day in Autun I went to M. Platon's house to dinner. He was a widower; his small son was away at school. He lived in a house filled with massive eighteenth-century furniture, and on the walls were several nineteenth-century paintings, including one silvery early Corot. We had an excellent dinner, with a sauce for the fish which had been invented by the humanist, so Doctor Platon said, whom I should meet later in the week, and which included a touch of honey of Hymettus, for the inventor, of course, loved Greece. Remembering my recent disaster, I grew a little diffident at the succession of courses and of wines. My host observed it. He reminded me that while I might study the Stoics I was dining with an Epicurean. Over the brandy and coffee in his library he took as his theme the life of the spirit in the provinces.

"All provincial towns are alike," he said, "be they in France or America. You have read *Madame Bovary*; I have read *Main Street*. There are a few free spirits in every such town, and in France they are chiefly lawyers and physicians. There are some others: sometimes a priest, sometimes a bookseller, a librarian. In Autun there are about half a dozen, and one of them lives out in the country some ten kilometres from Autun. We must drive over to see him. He is a philologist and would like to be a novelist. During the war he served four years and carried throughout the war the Homeric hymns in his pocket. They saved him from being killed once and they kept him alive always. There is no one else in the town to talk to about the things one really cares to talk about. I go off to Paris sometimes in desperation, but I feel like a foreigner there now with so many English and Americans about, and sometimes to get as good service as a foreigner does, I pretend I am a Hollander using English as an intermediate language. It is good luck that has brought

you here; perhaps I could contrive that that hotel of yours mildly poison each client who seems to be an itinerant humanist. Yet they would hardly know which to poison. The Comédie Française comes here occasionally during the summer and plays Racine in the Roman theatre. Some of the actors are cultivated people. I wrote a long poem about that theatre once."

He produced it and read a long section. It may have been better than English poetry but I had had too much food and wine to know or even completely to understand.

I took my leave. Would *monsieur le docteur* come to dine with me at the hotel? . . . I could not offer him as good a dinner, but they did very well. He would come gladly, but on one condition: frankly, he must choose his own wine. I was not stupid, but I was an American where the *vin du pays* was whisky, and where even that was forbidden.

A few days later Doctor Platon and I drove out at a wild pace to a neat, almost English-looking cottage on a wooded upland. M. Houvat, he explained, lived on a tiny income; he had been incapacitated during the war and could not carry on his university duties. He had had a novel or two published, but the philologist had got in the way of the artist. But he was a humanist in essence.

He was indeed such. It was a bright June day. We had tea and then wild strawberries, and M. Houvat, pale, slender, with one arm (the other had been lost in the trenches), talked of poetry, of Homer, and of the Homeric hymns. That was all he seemed to care to remember of the war.

"Would you like to see an amputation?" said the doctor as we drove back to town. "I must perform one now." I shuddered. "A philosopher should see everything," he said. I declined. He shrugged his shoulders.

The last night I was to be in Autun I again dined with the doctor. He had called for me to take a little stroll before going to his house. As we walked down the main street of the town he bowed almost continuously.

"You know everyone, doctor," I said. "If I walked along this street alone it would be simply a post-card view. You probably could tell me a story about everyone in this town, as you have already told me some about many of them."

"Everyone in this town is my friend, or my enemy; but they all know me. Only a nonentity remains unknown."

Toward the close of the evening, M. Platon again broached his project of the itinerant humanists. "We really should do something about it," he said. "There is only one country—it is that of people of intelligence. Its citizens are few; they should be acquainted."

I thanked my host for all his kindnesses and in the flush of the wine and the dinner said: "Doctor, I have seen a corner and an aspect of France not open to many travellers. I wonder if I might ask a favour. I have a friend who comes to Paris about once a year. He is a journalist. He meets the editors and

politicians; he never leaves Paris. Might he come to Autun? Might he greet you?"

M. Platon regarded me firmly. "Your friend, you say, is a journalist? You will pardon me—I will not receive him. *Un philosophe, voilà une chose; un journaliste, c'est tout autre chose. Je regrette; je ne reçois pas votre camarade. . . . Il n'est pas humaniste itinérant.*"²

WENDELL L. WILLKIE *The exploits of Wendell Willkie (1892-1944) are still fresh in the minds of millions of Americans; the bare notes of an introductory sketch are pale things beside the warmth and vigor of the man and the hope instinct in his ideas. When Willkie died in 1944, like Roosevelt a casualty of World War II, he had won a host of friends and admirers the world around. His book One World (1943) shows why. A national best-seller, it spoke the desires and shaped the hopes of the common man. The Republican candidate for the Presidency in 1940 had come out of Indiana years before to take successive positions in various law firms. From 1933 to 1940 he had been President of the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation. Later he became Chairman of the Board at Twentieth Century-Fox. In 1942 Willkie made a goodwill plane tour around the world on a special mission to visit war fronts in Africa, the Middle East, and Russia. The result was One World, which produced among the critics such phrases as "a seeing eye and an understanding heart," "breathless honesty," "must reading for every living American." The book is a fitting epitaph for the man.*

THE REPUBLIC OF YAKUTSK

THE SOVIET UNION covers an enormous territory, bigger than the United States, Canada, and Central America combined. The people are of many different races and nationalities, speaking many languages.

In a Siberian republic called Yakutsk, I found some answers to some of the questions Americans ask about Russia.

Many of the things I saw in Yakutsk would not hold true for all of Russia. Frontier conditions, a cold climate, endless new land free for the asking, and a pioneering spirit among the people are not to be found all over the Soviet Union. But in spite of these differences, Yakutsk—the story of its past and what I saw of its present—taught me new things about the Russian Revolution.

Yakutsk is a big country. It is twice as big as Alaska. It has not many people, only about 400,000 now, but it has resources enough to support a great many

"The Republic of Yakutsk," from *One World*. Copyright 1944 by Wendell Willkie.

² "A philosopher—that's one thing; a journalist—that's something quite different. I'm sorry, but I will not receive your friend. . . . He is not a wandering humanist."

more. The Soviets have begun to develop this country, and what I saw of their efforts seemed to me far more important, to the world and to America, than the political debate which has been carried on, both in Moscow and in New York, for so many years.

First, consider the past history of Yakutsk. The Yakuts were Mongol people who spread north as Genghis Khan moved to the west. Their characteristic high cheekbones, slanting eyes, and black hair still persist. Most of them trapped for furs or picked the earth for gold. They lived in huts, low-ceilinged, dirt-floored, smoky from open fires, with cattle and human beings living under the same roof, breeding places for tuberculosis. In winter, they lived on spoiled fish and roots; disease and frequent famines decimated what was once a hardy people. During the time of the tsars, Yakutsk was famous for syphilis, tuberculosis, and furs.

Russians came into this country slowly, and until recently in no great numbers. The government at St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) sent many of its convicts and political prisoners to Yakutsk. Many writers who had endured its bitter life wrote of it when they were released. And so Yakutsk was known as "the people's prison."

Incidentally, in the waitresses who served us while we were there I found some present-day exiles of the Soviet Union. One Polish woman particularly poured into my ear an account of the Soviet system which hardly accorded with official propaganda.

The first September snow had already coated the airfield when our Liberator bomber landed at Yakutsk, capital city of this republic. We had been flying for hours over the *taiga* or forestland, which covers the northern part of Siberia as far as the Arctic Circle. The land looks big and cold and empty from the air, with few roads to be seen, and miles upon miles of snow and trees.

A man stepped forward from the small group standing at the edge of the field where our plane stopped.

"My name is Muratov," he said. "I am president of the Council of People's Commissars of the Yakutsk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. I have instructions from Moscow, from Comrade Stalin, to take care of you while you are here, to show you anything you want to see, to answer any questions you may care to ask. Welcome."

It was a short speech, but he gave it everything he had. There were fewer than a dozen men standing on the airfield, but he carried himself with the air of a man flanked by brass bands and guards of honor to welcome a foreign visitor.

I thanked him and explained that we were stopping only briefly as there was still time that day to cover the next thousand-mile lap of our journey.

"You are not going on today, Mr. Willkie," he replied, "nor probably tomorrow. The weather reports are not good and it is part of my instructions to assure your safe arrival at your next stop, or I shall be liquidated."

We drove the five miles or more into the town of Yakutsk in a heavy black Soviet limousine. During the ride Muratov started on the program of selling

me his republic, which he never let up on for a moment during the hours I was with him. His enthusiasm knew no subtleties.

"What would you like to see in Yakutsk, Mr. Willkie?" he asked as we neared the town.

"Have you a library?"

"Certainly we have a library."

We went directly to it, and Muratov led us straight to the reading room without stopping for the removal of coats or hats. We were held up at the door, however, by a mild-mannered, slight, studious-looking woman who was completely unabashed by Muratov's obviously official manner. She said politely but firmly, "We are trying to teach the people here not only the habit of reading but the habit of good manners. Please go downstairs and leave your hats and coats in the coatroom." Muratov, a little startled, began to argue, but the best he accomplished was the concession that we might leave our hats and coats in her office. I almost laughed aloud. It was the first and only time in all of Russia that I saw an important Russian official stopped in his stride.

In an old but well-lighted building, clean and well staffed, Yakutsk, a town of 50,000 people, has accumulated 550,000 volumes. The stacks were wooden; the machine for delivering books to the reading room worked like a primitive country well. But the reading room was well occupied. The card catalogues were modern and complete. The records showed that over 100,000 people—many had come from the countryside around—had used books during the past nine months. Special exhibits hung on the walls. Soviet periodicals and reference works were on open shelves. There was an air of great efficiency about the place. This was a library any town of its size might well be proud of.

Our hotel—the only hotel in Yakutsk—was a new building, made of logs, with a Russian stove in every room. It was filled with tough-looking men in leather coats and boots made of reindeer fur. The girls were red-cheeked, with handkerchiefs tied around their heads. They had an amusing way of looking straight at us and laughing their heads off. We were foreigners.

The town itself seemed, in many ways, like a western town in this country a generation ago. In fact, much of this life reminded me of our own early and expanding days—especially the hearty, simple tastes, the not too subtle attitudes of mind, the tremendous vitality. The pavements along the bigger streets were boardwalks, like those I remember in Elwood when I was a boy. The houses had the neat, buttoned-up look of homes in any northern town, with light from the windows and soft smoke coming from the chimneys.

There was plenty to remind us, however, that this was Siberia and not Minnesota or Wisconsin. Most of the houses were built of logs, with felt packed between them, and their façades were covered with the intricate scrollwork of all Siberian houses.

The food was Siberian—a whole roast pig on the table for breakfast, sausages, eggs, cheese, soup, chicken, veal, tomatoes and pickles, wine and a vodka concentrate so strong that even Russians poured water into it. Each meal served to us was as big as the one that preceded it. There was vodka at break-

fast, and steaming tea all day long. It is a cold country, and whatever the Yakuts ate outside our hotel, they apparently ate plenty.

I wondered about the amusements of the people.

"Have you a theater?" I asked Muratov.

He had, and we went to it later in the evening. He told me the performance began at nine o'clock. After dinner we drank vodka and talked, and I suddenly realized that it was already after nine.

"What time did you say the show started?" I asked him.

"Mr. Willkie," he answered, "the show starts when I get there."

And so it did. This time nobody stopped him. We walked into our box a half-hour later, sat down, and up went the curtain. We saw a gypsy opera, performed by a Leningrad company on tour. The dancing was excellent, the staging good, the singing fair. The audience liked it noisily, though the theater was not quite filled, this being the ninth consecutive performance of the same opera in that town.

The war was far removed that night from this audience of young people, and so was the ideology of Communism. Love and jealousy and gypsy dances filled the stage, and between the acts the young men with their girls paraded arm in arm around the theater as Russian audiences always do.

But earlier, in the twilight, with the new snow crunching under our feet, we had gone to see the district museum. There we found vivid reminders of the war. The graphs on the walls showing the increase in schools, hospitals, cattle, retail trade, all stopped at June, 1941, as if the country's life had stopped then. And the answer to each of my questions ended with an explanation of how much more could have been done had not the Germans put a temporary end to all normal progress.

Muratov showed me at the museum samples of the real gold which is now the greatest wealth of Yakutsk, and of the "soft gold"—or furs—which is its second most valuable product. Among the sables, foxskins, and bearskins were the soft, small pelts of Arctic hares and white squirrels. These smaller animals, he explained, must be shot through the eye if the skin is not to be spoiled. When I expressed a polite skepticism of the economic possibilities of a profession in which you must shoot squirrels invariably through the eye, Muratov stood his ground. All Yakutsk hunters, he said, when they are mobilized into the Red Army, are so good that they are classified automatically as snipers.

During the day, too, we were aware of the war. Though Yakutsk is three thousand miles from the front, we found simple people, most of whom had never seen a German in their lives or traveled west of the Ural Mountains, talking earnestly of "the war for the fatherland."

I asked Muratov what he was doing about the education of the people.

"Mr. Willkie," he said, "the answer is simple. Before 1917, only two per cent of all the people of Yakutsk were literate; ninety-eight per cent could not read or write. Now the figures are exactly reversed.

"Moreover," he went on, smiling cheerfully at me, "I have now received an order from Moscow to liquidate the two per cent illiteracy before the end of next year."

Once more that term "liquidate." It is constantly used in Russia. It can mean the accomplishment of a set task (the task itself has been liquidated), or it can mean imprisonment, exile, or death for incapacity, failure, or deliberate obstruction. I remembered an item that Joe Barnes had read to me from *Pravda*, about the fate of the manager of a collective farm who had just been sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment because one hundred cows had died on his farm. He had failed to liquidate the causes, so he himself had been liquidated, and the government wanted other farm managers to know.

Muratov showed us with pride Yakutsk's newest motion-picture theater. It was one of the concrete buildings with which he has disproved an old belief that only wooden structures could be built on eternally frozen subsoil.

The most attractive building in town, however, housed the local Communist party headquarters. I had often wondered how in actual practice three million Communist party members—that is all there are in Russia, about one and one-half per cent of the population—could impose their ideas and their control on two hundred million. Here in Yakutsk I began to understand the process.

There was no other organized group in the town; no church, no lodge, no other party. Approximately only 750 people, one and one-half per cent of Yakutsk's 50,000, belong to the Communist party and are members of the town's one club. But these 750 include all the directors of factories, managers of collective farms, the government officials, most of the doctors, superintendents of schools, intellectuals, writers, librarians, and teachers. In other words, in Yakutsk as in most communities in Russia, the best-educated, the most alert, the brightest and ablest men of the community are members of the Communist party. Each of these Communist clubs, all over Russia, is part of a tight-knit national organization, of which Stalin is still Secretary General. One can understand why he still prefers that title to any other which he holds. For this organization keeps the party in power. Its members are the vested-interest group. That is the answer.

Americans would not like that kind of one-party system. But I found in Yakutsk evidence of one of the Soviet Union's greatest achievements and one which the best and most progressive Americans must applaud: its handling of the terrible problem of national and racial minorities.

This town was still largely populated by Yakuts. They made up eighty-two per cent of the population of the republic. As far as I could see, they lived as the Russians lived; they held high office; they wrote their own poetry and had their own theater. Appointive offices filled from Moscow, like Muratov's, were more often held by Russians. Elective offices were usually filled, I was told, by Yakuts. Schools taught both languages. War posters along the streets were captioned in both Russian and Yakut.

How permanent this solution will be it would be hard to predict. Undoubtedly some of its strength lies in the great open spaces of a republic so big that most of it is still unmapped, where more than 100,000 different lakes and streams, Muratov told me, have in the last few years been found and named. I realize that empty space such as we flew over in the republic of Yakutsk for

two long days is a great cushion for the conflicts which in Europe have bred prejudice and persecution.

Few things in this Siberian outpost of the Soviet Union interested me more than Muratov himself. If the town of Yakutsk suggested answers to many of my questions, Muratov gave me the key to many others. For he is typical of the new men who are running Russia. And many of his characteristics and much of his career were curiously like those of many Americans I have known.

He is a short, stocky man, with a round, smiling, clean-shaven face. Born in Saratov on the Volga, he was the son of a peasant farmer. Picked from a machine shop in Stalingrad for special schooling because he was bright, he had worked and studied his way through school, through the university, and through the Institute of Red Professors, Moscow's leading graduate school in the social sciences. Two years ago, he had been sent here close to the Arctic Circle to head the Council of People's Commissars of Yakutsk.

Here he was, thirty-seven years old, educated entirely after the 1917 Revolution, running a republic bigger than any other in the U.S.S.R., more than five times as big as France. I saw a good deal of him for a couple of days. He is a man who would do well in America; in his own country he was doing something more than well.

His way of doing things, like the Soviet way all over Siberia, is rough and tough and often cruel and sometimes mistaken. His comment would be: "But it gets results." When I pressed him for details about the economic development of Yakutsk, he talked like a California real-estate salesman. And once more I was reminded of the robust days of great development in this country, at the beginning of the century, when our own leaders were men chiefly interested in getting things done.

"Why, consider, Mr. Willkie. We set up the Yakutsk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in 1922, when the civil wars were finally won. Stalin was Commissar of Minor Nationalities then. Since that time, we've multiplied the budget of this republic eighty times, and everyone who lives here knows it in his heart and in his stomach.

"Why, Yakutsk used to be just a white spot on all the maps. Now, this month, our gold mines won third place in competing against all the nonferrous mining of Russia. They are ahead of plan." And he filled me with figures.

His power plant had just won first place in a competition of all municipal plants in the Soviet Union, and a red flag from the party for cutting production costs to 6.27 kopecks for each kilowatt hour.

"We've invested more than a billion rubles in Yakutsk in twenty years," he said. "We'll cut nearly 4,000,000 cubic meters of wood this year, against 35,000 in 1911. And we've still got a long way to go before we hit the annual growth, which we figure is 88,000,000 cubic meters."

He had obviously been planning in terms of international trade.

"When this war is over, you in America are going to need wood and wood pulp. And we're going to need machines, all kinds of machines. We're not so far away from you, as soon as we get the Arctic sea route open. Come and get it; we'll be glad to swap."

I saw with my own eyes that his tales were not all salesmanship. Yakutsk is about a thousand miles from a railroad. Only this year they are finishing a hard-surfaced, all-weather highway to tie the republic in with the Trans-Siberian Railroad and Moscow. Until now, they have been dependent for communication on airways and on the Lena River. In summer, steamers and barges move goods up the Lena to Yakutsk from Tikhsi Bay, where the Arctic freighters berth. In winter, the river's frozen surface makes the only hard road the republic has ever known.

Gold and furs are precious goods; they have moved without roads since the beginning of history. But Yakutsk has now been found by Soviet research expeditions to have great wealth in other things: silver, nickel, copper, lead. Oil has been found, and although details of the wells are military secrets, Muratov told me they would be producing commercially before the end of 1943. In fish, lumber, and salt, the country has literally untapped resources. And a sizable ivory industry has been built, curiously enough, on the tusks of mammoths, prehistoric animals which once ranged over this area and have been preserved ever since in Arctic cold storage.

Even in agriculture, Yakutsk has possibilities. At the museum, they showed me samples of the crossbred wheat with which the Russians have been pushing northward the limit of their wheat belt. The growing season is short, but the subsoil is full of water and the sun shines all day and almost all night in summer.

Most of the farms—ninety-seven per cent in September—have been collectivized. Reindeer are still the chief motive power of the republic, but there are now some hundreds of tractors, operated from machine tractor stations which lease them to the farms. The republic even has 160 combines—"Think of it, Mr. Willkie, 160 combines at the Arctic Circle!"—and a small but growing army of specialists determined to make the frozen tundra of the north flower and produce crops.

These people have developed an enthusiasm and a self-confidence which reminded me repeatedly of the romance of our own Western development. I came away from Yakutsk with a powerful curiosity to know what it will look like ten years from now.

When I got home, I found a similar curiosity about all Russia in people's minds and an attitude toward Russia made up of admiration and fear.

What is Russia going to do? Is she going to be the new disturber of the peace? Is she going to demand conditions at the end of the war that will make it impossible to re-establish Europe on a decent peaceful road? Is she going to attempt to infiltrate other countries with her economic and social philosophy?

Frankly, I don't think anyone knows the answers to these questions; I doubt if even Mr. Stalin knows all the answers.

Obviously, it would be ridiculous for me to attempt to say what Russia is going to do. This much, however, I do know to be true: there are 200,000,000 subjects of the U.S.S.R.; they control the largest single land mass in the world under one government; they have almost inexhaustible supplies of timber,

iron, coal, oil, which are, practically speaking, unexploited; through elaborate systems of hospitalization and public-health organizations the Russian people are one of the healthiest peoples in the world, living in a vigorous, stimulating climate; in the last twenty-five years, through a widespread, drastic educational system, a large percentage have become literate and tens of thousands technically trained; and from the topmost official to the most insignificant farm or factory worker the Russians are fanatically devoted to Russia and supercharged with the dream of its future development.

I don't know the answers to all the questions about Russia, but there's one other thing I know: that such a force, such a power, such a people cannot be ignored or disposed of with a high hat or a lifting of the skirt. We cannot act as if we were housewives going into an A & P store, picking and choosing among the groceries displayed; taking this, leaving that. The plain fact is: we have no choice in the matter. Russia will be reckoned with. That is the reason why I am constantly telling my fellow Americans: work in ever-closer cooperation with the Russians while we are joined together in the common purpose of defeating a common enemy. Learn all we can about them and let them learn about us.

There's still another thing I know: geographically, from a trade standpoint, in their similarity of approach to many problems, the Russians and the Americans should get along together. The industrialization of Russia will require a limitless amount of American products, and Russia has unlimited natural resources that we need. The Russians, like us, are a hardy, direct people and have great admiration for everything in America, except the capitalistic system. And, frankly, there are many things in Russia that we can admire—its vigor, its vast dreams, its energy, its tenacity of purpose. No one could be more opposed to the Communist doctrine than I am, for I am completely opposed to any system that leads to absolutism. But I have never understood why it should be assumed that in any possible contact between Communism and democracy, democracy should go down.

So let me say once more: I believe it is possible for Russia and America, perhaps the most powerful countries in the world, to work together for the economic welfare and the peace of the world. At least, knowing that there can be no enduring peace, no economic stability, unless the two work together, there is nothing I ever wanted more to believe. And so deep is my faith in the fundamental rightness of our free economic and political institutions that I am convinced they will survive any such working together.

BIOGRAPHY

A NOTE ON BIOGRAPHY

IF, AS Carlyle remarked, "A well-written life is almost as rare as a well-spent one," must we conclude from the large number of good twentieth-century biographies that writers and subjects the world around have suddenly and simultaneously acquired virtue and articulation in wholesale proportions? Or, less facetiously, may we find evidence that biography, like the novel, is still undergoing evolution and that the time has come in the history of biography when subject, taste, and talent at last find themselves in happy conjunction? The reasons for reading about other people can scarcely have changed very much; what may well have changed is the number of readers who are convinced that the reasons are sound. This conviction possibly rests on the fact that a better two-way relationship has been established between author and reader. In a sense the public has become educated to accept works which it would have ignored years ago, just as it has been taught by persistent repetition of better films to enjoy cinematic biographies which in earlier years would have been walked out on. Partly through desire to sell, partly for self-satisfaction, the modern writer of biography has shown more consideration for the reader than did the traditional biographer; the modern chronicler paints a more honest and thorough picture from different motivation and for different purposes.

The student who reads fiction should be aware that in this field a steady diet of pulp stories, while tolerable as a pastime, is hardly calculated to develop a high form of appreciation or true reading intelligence; he eventually learns through constant exposure and training to look for more than quick action, final "clinchés," and sentimental clichés. Characterization, style, psychology, philosophy, and other components of the modern novel may be opened up for him as a source of continual growth and inspiration, amusement on a higher plane. If by happy accident or deliberate choice the student should turn to biography, he will find ample reason to continue his explorations. He will soon learn to discard some early work as insincere and some recent work as sensational. In the process he may discover reasons for the popularity of modern biography—here are some of them:

1. Thanks to the "new" psychology we know more about people's inner workings than we did. A good biography—one with subject and style in harmony—will tell the reader things about humanity that he might not learn in any other way, unless he were already a professional Spectator. The walls of civilization around all of us, walls that keep out knowledge of intimate truths, are easily scaled in a biography. There we may study the subject in an unusual privacy, unknown in most everyday experience. The results may be startling, edifying, refreshing—at any rate "educational" in the best sense of the word.

(Particularly conspicuous in frank autobiography, such revelation may be found in our selections by Ludwig Lewisohn and H. L. Mencken.)

2. Biography also has, in various combinations, many of the best attributes of fiction: action, characterization, theme, and so on. But the reader of a good life will get an added dividend on his time-investment: his book is true! The feeling of “—and it really happened that way” gives an added fillip to any story. In this sense biography is fiction-plus, the “impossible possible” that fascinated the ancients in contemplation and fascinates the moderns in actuality.

3. Most of us enjoy good gossip whether we admit it or not. A kinder term might be the word “anecdote.” Whether one reads the tall tales of the seventeenth-century Aubrey, with his yarns of ghosts who disappeared “with a melodious twang,” or the documented observations of a modern Pearson who tells us of Bernard Shaw’s bemused remarks as he watched his sister cremated, one is continuously at grips with the strange, colorful, amusing, sad tales that go to make up life—and go to make it more interesting and profitable. Here biography becomes a series of stories with a strong accent on narrative skill; again, your biographer may shift to analysis or diagnosis and use his tales as basis for conjecture, philosophy, character study—thus making the fictional quality of the true story take on double significance for the reader’s benefit: amusement and instruction.

4. Some students may have been taught to look for the moral in every literary work. All too often such a search tends to focus on values and ignore the lure of the writing itself. Nevertheless, one benefit from reading biography is the learning at second-hand from the achievements or mistakes of others. This experience may not be exciting, but it is authentic. Whether one reads a comparatively stodgy account of how, through sheer labor, an immigrant became a Nobel Prize winner, or a satirical study of big business methods as seen in the success story of a cosmetics queen (see Miss Keiffer’s closeup of Helena Rubinstein), or a sophisticated and delicately balanced profile of a prominent novelist (see Hamilton Basso’s sketch of Somerset Maugham), one can scarcely come away from his new acquaintance without a feeling of having gained something. One may call it moral teaching or just plain experience—he is a bigger person for having read certain types of biography.

Sooner or later the curious student will discover the great tradition of biography and may work out for himself the steps in its evolutionary process. He may go back to Plutarch (first century after Christ) and study the “Parallel Lives” of the Greeks and Romans, some of which were borrowed by Shakespeare as material for *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and other plays. These are portraits, done as if to order, reliable up to a point, but loud in their omissions. They are relatively short, lack real style, serve primarily as pilot models for comparison with the best modern efforts; they are classic in the sense that they are “established.” The student may then jump down to the eighteenth century in England (ignoring Foxe, Aubrey, and Walton for the moment) to peruse the famous *Life of Johnson* by Boswell. This study of the arbiter of literary fashion in his day set a model for many later biog-

raphers to copy. Boswell noted what his subject said, wore, ate, and drank; and when Johnson said nothing, Boswell would ask a question. The result is an arresting compendium of information which is chiefly remarkable in that it avoids Plutarchan politeness or evasion and shows the subject "warts and all." Long and loose in structure, Boswell's monumental study set the fashion for a biographical type: the carefully annotated and documented study. A nineteenth-century parallel would be Lockhart's life of Scott, and a modern descendant (with environmental changes) would be Hesketh Pearson's life of Bernard Shaw. As he crept closer to our day, the student would eventually meet with Lytton Strachey and his studies of Elizabeth, Victoria, and many a lesser figure. Here he might experience a shock. Strachey and his "Satanic School" went even further than showing "warts and all." Now and then they showed only the warts. At its best this type of writing stripped the veil of illusion from absurd myths about people; at its worst, it allowed literary quacks to make money by pandering to the tastes of those who prefer the cheap and the scandalous. In the ultimate analysis, however, the modern reader must thank Strachey and the best of his imitators for insisting on a picturesque honesty and developing a charming literary style which is so far from the encyclopedic monotony of mere facts as to be dramatically entertaining; here biography becomes an art form.

Recent trends and recent writers are hard to follow and appraise truly. Their very number baffles the patient researcher. And caution bids an editor to recall the old truism that history seems to show that even capable observers are unable to view their contemporaries with the proper over-all perspective. The interested student can acquire a suitable reading list in the classics from any librarian who knows her profession. Some recent collections of short biographies and excerpts from longer ones (Balch's *Modern Short Biographies and Autobiographies*, Harcourt, 1940; Durling and Watts' *Biography: Varieties and Parallels*, Dryden, 1941; and Beckwith and Coope's *Contemporary American Biography*, Harper, 1941) will serve to acquaint student and teacher alike with new directions and offer bibliographies for extended reading. In the current flux a few recognizable islands of security are prominent, nevertheless. What with our modern insistence on speed and streamlining, we tend for better or worse to concentrate on shorter forms—witness tabloid newspapers, digest magazines, and short short stories. The short biography, known to Plutarch, revived later, relegated to comparative obscurity by Boswell and most others down to our day, has come back, perhaps to stay. It has not eliminated the full-length study, of course, as can be seen in Sandburg's life of Lincoln and Freeman's portraits of Lee and his lieutenants; it has its own virtues and limitations.

In comparison with long biographies, the shorter forms have, roughly speaking, the same advantages and disadvantages that short stories have in contrast to novels. Since art does not depend on size alone (if it did, a daub of a mural would excel an exquisite miniature), the true test of the modern short biography must lie, after all, in the old question, "Is it well written?" Some of the best modern brief treatments include the psychographs of Gamaliel Brad-

ford, the sophisticated profiles of *The New Yorker*, and the delicately, subtly intelligent sketches of Virginia Woolf in her *Common Reader*; at a middle level, one might try William Bolitho's *Twelve Against the Gods*; and at a popular (and not in a snobbish sense) level, the scientific-literary work of Paul de Kruif (*Microbe Hunters*, etc.).

Autobiography has been conspicuously successful in our day. Although Samuel Pepys in his seventeenth-century diary and Dorothy Wordsworth in her nineteenth-century journal had demonstrated that nothing is quite so fascinating as a personal display-confessional, it has remained for the moderns to put frankness in a position where it is both "box-office" and artistic. Today's knowledge of psychology, today's rejection of some old sex taboos, today's dynamic urge to test and to question—all these have had, generally, a salutary effect on the development of biography (excluding the cheap and the meretricious). Perhaps in this fundamental honesty we have the clue to the mass-popularity of biography today, a popularity which can easily be seen in the lists of best-sellers and best-renters. H. G. Wells in his *Experiment in Autobiography*, Arnold Bennett in his *Journal*, and Katherine Mansfield in her *Journal* have contributed some of the frankest and bravest passages in modern literature; James Joyce showed that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between fiction and biography, but that the compound is likely to be an interesting one; Dali's surrealist autobiography and Thurber's humorous and moody sketches sometimes defy classification, but do serve to show the range of modern biographical writing; while Lincoln Steffens and William A. Percy in their autobiographies clearly indicate that a life of one man can do three things at once: It can give evidence of a personal catharsis in the author as he reviews his career; it can demonstrate the effect of that life on other people whom the author met; and it can, very often, produce a cleansing effect on the reader himself. (See "Berlin and Heidelberg" and "Learning from Teachers.")

There was a time, about twenty-five years ago, when autobiographies seemed to concentrate on the immigrant-to-inventor or up-from-nothing theme. More recently, in cycle style, appeared a flood of books—nostalgic, simple, well documented—which exploited the virtues of country lawyer, parson, editor, and so on. Most recently, the trend has been, understandably, toward lives of people in the theater and gentlemen of the press. If not demonstrating anything else, this evolution should clearly indicate another virtue of the biography-type: flexibility. Dozens of able correspondents—Hersey, Shirer, Sheean, White, Gunther, Pyle (to name a few)—have added a new meaning to the old term "memoir." And in the world of the theater A. A. Milne, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Noel Coward, Ilka Chase, and others have clearly demonstrated that the "How I Got There" formula is not confined to any one field of operations. The success story, in biography or fiction, is still the average man's bolster; wanting to be appreciated, as James pointed out, he can always derive a vicarious pleasure from the testimonies of others.

The modern frankness which in other directions produced Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* and Bellamann's *King's Row* is clearly seen in biography of the present, which has blossomed out with the advent of the clinical method.

Bradford walks around his subject, rejects dates, degrees, number of children, and comes up with a character sketch which accomplishes the same end achieved by a painter or sculptor who desires to catch the personality without worrying about photographic likeness; Ludwig and Maurois absorb factual data, allow them to filter through a cerebral coil, and produce an eclectic synthesis which is part-author, part-fact. In all justice to values, one is forced to admit that the student must occasionally examine two types of biography of the same person: in the case of Shelley, for example, he should consult Newman White's *Shelley* for a scholarly, factual treatment and Maurois' *Ariel* for a "creative" personality-projection.

Finally, whether one consults an encyclopedia for bare facts, a satirical sketch for the inherent fun in a lampoon, or a "straight" biography which attempts to tell the truth entertainingly, the appeal of the "fiction-plus" should be, for the intelligent reader, irresistible. Biography, when all is said, is not for the trivial-minded. For the individual who is working out his own solution or compromise in the tangle of living, who is willing to take the noble risk of meeting disillusionment to gain a private pleasure, the facts of life as some literate human being has found them should come home most pleasurably and effectively in biography. Biography has been and can be—to use a shopworn phrase—all things to all men; perhaps there lies its enchantment. It has been, variously, in the past and present, an insincere eulogy, a moral lesson, a footnote on history, a sentimental memoir, a factual account, a slashing satire, a candid portrait. Whatever happens to biography in the future, it should remain factually sound, humanly sympathetic, and always as alive as the human being whose name is somewhere on the title-page.

H. L. MENCKEN¹

RECOLLECTIONS OF ACADEMIC ORGIES

SOME time ago I read in the New York papers about the death of an Irishman who had been esteemed and honored in life as the inventor of the hot-dog. The papers themselves appeared to believe that he had deserved this veneration, for they gave his peaceful exitus almost as much space as they commonly give to the terminal deliriums of a movie star or United States Senator. They said that he had made his epochal invention in the year 1900 or thereabout, and that it had been first marketed as consumers' goods at the Polo Grounds.

All this made me smile in a sly way, for I devoured hot-dogs in Baltimore 'way back in 1886, and they were then very far from new-fangled. They differed from the hot-dogs of today in one detail only, and that one was hardly of statistical significance. They contained precisely the same rubbery, indigestible pseudo-sausages that millions of Americans now eat, and they leaked the same flabby, puerile mustard. Their single point of difference lay in the fact that their covers were honest German *Wecke* made of wheat-flour baked to crispness, and not the soggy rolls prevailing today, of ground acorns, plaster-of-Paris, flecks of bath-sponge, and atmospheric air all compact.

The name hot-dog, of course, was then still buried in the womb of time: we called them *Weckers*, being ignorant that the true plural of *Weck* was *Wecke*, or in one of the exceptional situations so common in German grammar, *Wecken*. They were on sale at the Baltimore baseball-grounds in the primeval days before even Muggsy McGraw had come to town, and they were also sold at all picnics. In particular, I recall wolfing them at the annual picnic of F. Knapp's Institute. One year I got down six in a row, and suffered a considerable bellyache thereafter, which five bottles of sarsaparilla did not cure. My brother Charlie did even better. He knocked off eight *Wecke*, and then went strutting about with no bellyache at all. But Charlie, in those days, had a gizzard like a concrete-mixer, and I well recall the morning when he ate eighteen buckwheat cakes for breakfast, and gave up even then only because the hired girl had run out of batter.

The annual picnic of F. Knapp's Institute, always holden in early June, was the great event of the school year, and the older pupils began chattering about it soon after Christmas. Tickets were twenty-five cents each, but every pupil

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¹ See p. 305 for a biographical sketch of H. L. Mencken.

could buy them at five for a dollar, and the extra quarter was his profit. It was clearly understood that the money thus amassed was undividedly his own, and that the way he spent it was nobody's damned business. It was not etiquette for the teachers of the institute, or even his parents, to molest him when he set out to clean up the *Wecke*, pretzels, doughnuts and other delicatessen that were on sale on the grounds, or tried to stretch his skin over ten or a dozen bottles of sarsaparilla. If he collapsed there were benches for him to lie on, and a bottle of paregoric to medicate him.

The picnic was always held at Darley Park, a pleasant grove adjoining a suburban brewery. It was outfitted in the stark, Philistine style of the period, with all the trees whitewashed up to a height of six feet. Scattered about were a couple of dozen plain board tables, each outfitted with hard benches. In the middle of the grove was a small pavilion, with a senile excursion-boat piano in the center of it. Along one boundary ran a long brick building, and somewhere within it was a bar. The *Weck*, crab-cake, pretzel, doughnut and sarsaparilla vendors circled about, howling their wares. In a far corner was a portable carrousel with four horses, operated by what was then always called jackass-power. That is to say, it was kept going by a sweating Aframerican turning a crank. He turned it steadily from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., and there were always plenty of girls and baby-class boys waiting in line. We more elderly roués spent all our money on food and drink. Sarsaparilla had a sharp bite, and, like opium, produced an appetite for itself. So did *Wecke*.

When the great day arrived all the pupils of the institute piled into a string of Gay-street horse-cars and proceeded to Darley Park at high speed. Professor Knapp always traveled by the first car, and took up at once the police duties of the day. He never carried his battery of rattans along, but he had sharp eyes and a good memory, and any boy who pulled too many of the girls' pigtails, or engaged in fisticuffs with another boy, or indulged himself in sassing a teacher was sure to go on trial the next morning, with two or three swooshes to rearward following. But crime was relatively rare at those picnics, and I remember one (I should add in frankness that it was considered exceptional) which didn't produce a single culprit. We played the immemorial games of the schoolyard, but mainly we played follow-your-leader. Sometimes as many as forty boys would be in line, and the course would include hurdles over all the benches in the park, and even up into the pavilion and over the excursion-boat piano. One year the leader, a large, gaunt boy who was generally regarded as feeble-minded, led the gang out of the park and into an adjoining brickyard, and there took it through a series of puddles bottomed with red clay. When the procession returned and the professor saw the boys' shoes, he got into a dreadful lather, and soon after sunrise the next morning he broke a rattan over the half-wit's caboose.

At noon or thereabout parents began to arrive, usually in buggies. They were received formally by the whole faculty of the school, and the mothers proceeded at once to track down and inspect their offspring, looking (in the case of boys) for dirty hands, holes in stockings and skinned shins, and (in the case of girls) for torn skirts and lost hair-ribbons. . . .

While the mothers of the pupils were inspecting them, their fathers, following custom, would invite the male pedagogues to the bar, and there ply them with beer. My father always had a low opinion of the Baltimore beers, and complained bitterly whenever he had to drink them. He concocted an elaborate legend about one of the worst of them, to the effect that it was made of the ammoniacal liquor discharged from the Baltimore gasworks, with mill-feed for malt and picric acid for hops. Once, when I was still a small boy, I was riding proudly with him on the platform of a horse-car, when he encountered a *Todsäufer*² belonging to the brewery that made it, and proceeded to warn him solemnly that drinking his own goods would wreck his kidneys and bring him to an early grave. To my astonishment, the *Todsäufer* admitted it freely, but explained that he owed \$2000 to a building association on a house he had bought, and wanted to work off the debt before returning to his former and less remunerative trade of soft-drink drummer. My father thereupon offered him a job as a cigar salesman, but they couldn't come to terms. He must have actually died soon afterward, for I remember my father citing him as a tragic example of what men will do and suffer for money.

But the pedagogues appeared to stand the Darley Park beer very well, and indeed plainly liked it. As father after father dropped in, and schooner after schooner was dispatched, the 'gogues apparently gave glowing accounts of the diligence and scholarship of their pupils, for it was not uncommon for a father, coming out for air, to give his boy an extra ten cents. Mr. Fox, a man of quasi-military bearing, usually swayed ever so gently as the session in the bar ended, and he made his way to the pavilion for the closing ceremonies of the day. As for Mr. Paul, he emerged mopping his face solemnly with his cologne-scented handkerchief, and burping surreptitiously under it. I never detected any such signs in Mr. Willie, but that was probably because he was something of an *eleganto*, and always called for small beers. His hair was plastered down with plenty of soap, and not a strand of it was ever out of place. The old professor, being a Suabian, was immune to all the ordinary effects of alcohol. Toward the close of the ceremonies in the pavilion he always fell into a doze, but he did the same thing every afternoon of his life, whether he had been consuming malt liquor or well water.

The ceremonies themselves tended to be banal, for everybody was tired by then. They began with some songs by the massed pupils, accompanied by Miss Bertha on the excursion-boat piano, and they moved through the classical répertoire of recitations. I was once chosen to do "The Wreck of the Hesperus," but blew up in the second stanza. Elocution, indeed, has always been a closed art to me, for I have never been able to memorize even the shortest

² A *Todsäufer* (literally, dead-drinker) was, and is, a sort of brewer's customers' man. He is commonly called a collector, but his duties go far beyond collecting the bills owed to breweries by saloonkeepers. He is supposed to stand a general treat in the bar whenever he calls, to go to all weddings, birthday parties and funerals in the families of saloonkeepers, and to cultivate their wives and children with frequent presents. When a saloonkeeper himself dies the *Todsäufer* is the principal mourner *ex officio*, and is expected to weep copiously. He is also one of the brewery's political agents, and must handle all the license difficulties of his clients. He belongs to all the clubs and societies that will admit him, including always, if there is one, the town press-club.

piece, whether in prose or verse. At the time of my first and only appearance as an actor on the public stage (it was after I had left F. Knapp's Institute) I forgot both of my two lines. My brother Charlie was called for to pinch hit for me when "The Wreck of the Hesperus" went phooey, but he did not respond, and a quick and quiet search found him hiding under the pavilion. There was always a little girl with a piano solo, but she was invariably drowned out by a freight-train of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which ran only a few blocks away.

If there were any politicians present, which was usually the case, they arose to expound the issues of the hour. General Ferdinand C. Latrobe, Mayor of Baltimore for seven terms, always showed up, and always made a speech. Inasmuch as the professor was a German, the general devoted himself courteously to whooping up the unparalleled scientific, esthetic and moral gifts of the German people, and to revealing all over again the fact that he was partly of German blood himself, despite his French-sounding name. He made exactly similar speeches at all gatherings of predominantly non-Anglo-Saxon Baltimoreans, omitting only the Aframericans and the Chinese. In his later years (I had by then become a newspaper reporter) I heard him claim not only Irish, Scotch, Welsh, Dutch and other such relatively plausible bloods, but also Polish, Bohemian, Italian, Lithuanian, Swedish, Danish, Greek, Spanish and even Jewish. Once I actually heard him hint that he was remotely an Armenian. Unable by the current *mores* to boast of African ancestry, he consoled his colored customers by speaking in high terms of Abraham Lincoln, whom he described as a Republican with a Democratic heart. The best he could do for the Chinese, who were then very few in Baltimore, was to quote some passages from the Analects of Confucius, which he had studied through the medium of a secretary.

When the last politico shut down the professor called off the proceedings, and we all started home. My father drove the family buggy, and I sat between him and my mother, with my brother roosting on a hassock on the floor. We kept to the horse-car tracks as much as possible, for the cobblestones of Baltimore, in those days, were world-famous for their roughness. Whenever we had to turn out on them my brother bounced off his hassock, and had to be derricked back. He and I were pretty well used up by the time we got home, and after a meager supper were ordered to bed. We slept as profoundly as convicts in the death-house, for it was not until the next morning that the chigger-bites picked up in the brickyard began to make themselves manifest. Half the boys scratched violently for three or four days thereafter, but none of the girls. The old professor always dropped in to point the moral. The boys, being naturally vicious, had disobeyed orders and explored the brickyard, which was a resort of noxious insects and human desperadoes, but the girls, being virtuous and law-abiding, had stayed on the right side of the fence. Hence their immunity.

There were plenty of other gala days during the school year, but none so stupendous as the day of the annual picnic, save maybe the day of the circus parade. All parades in Baltimore passed within hearing of F. Knapp's Institute,

for the City Hall was only across the street, and its portico was the customary reviewing-stand. The most brutal punishment that could be imagined by a Knapp boy, or indeed any Baltimore schoolboy, was to be confined to barracks when a circus parade was under way. So far as I can recall, it never actually happened in our school, though it was often threatened. We always turned out in command of Mr. Fox and Mr. Paul, each of them armed with a rattan, and the cops made room for us along the curb. If any of the loafers who hung about the City Hall refused to move, the cops fell upon them with fists and night-sticks, at the same time denouncing them as low characters, fit only for penal servitude.

I remember of these circus parades only the patient tramp of the elephants, the loudness of the music, and the unearthly beauty of the lady bareback riders, with their yellow wigs, dazzling spangles and pink tights. They seemed to us boys to be even more beautiful than Miss Bertha and Miss Elvina, who were our everyday paragons of female loveliness. The parade consumed most of the morning, and those boys whose fathers were taking them to the actual circus also escaped for the afternoon. They returned next day full of astounding tales and in a low state of health, for pink lemonade in that era was actually pink, and four or five glasses of it left the gall-bladder considerably fevered. There was a memorable year when two circuses came to town, and another when the circus was followed by Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. We admired Buffalo Bill and shivered at the sight of his bloodthirsty Indians, but the general feeling was that the circus was better. Certainly the lady sharpshooters and Indian squaws had nothing on the bareback riders.

Now and then the old professor and his staff would shepherd the whole student body to some other public show, usually of a painfully cultural character. I remember clearly only one such expedition. It was an exhibit of Mexican arts and handicrafts at a hall in Charles street. The squat pottery, gaudy blankets, crude jewelry and other such stuff left me cold; indeed, I dislike all Mexican fancy-goods to this day, and regard even the masterpieces of Diego Rivera as trash. But I remember very brilliantly a sort of side-show, for it consisted of two human skeletons, the first I had ever seen. One was the skeleton of a peon who had been shot by a bandit, with the bullet hole plainly visible in the center of his forehead. The other was the skeleton of the bandit who had shot him, with one of the cervical vertebrae dislocated to show the effect of the rope that had punished the crime.

These ghastly relics were displayed in two long boxes covered with black cloth, and set up at an angle of sixty degrees. My brother and I, at first sight of them, turned quickly and slunk away, but things that are horrible are always fascinating to boys, and so we came back every now and then for another look, and by the end of the afternoon we had got massive eyefuls. That night (we slept together) we pulled the quilt over our heads and dreamed dreadful dreams of shootings, stabbings, scalpings, hangings, graveyards and dissecting-rooms, with herds of bleeding ghosts all over the place. I have encountered a great many skeletons since, and got upon easy terms with some of them, but whenever I shut my eyes and ponder upon mortality

I always see the poor bones of those forlorn and anonymous Mexicans, bounced into Heaven in a far country and so long ago.

The crown and consummation of the year at Knapp's was the annual exhibition in June, following soon after the picnic. For this sombre event the largest schoolroom was chosen, and chairs for the parents of the pupils were arranged on the two sides of the teacher's desk. The programme followed classical models, stretching back, I suppose, to the times of Tiglath-pileser. First the whole school would sing, with Miss Bertha at the organ and the old professor leading with his violin; then the prizes (always books) won by diligent and docile pupils would be presented to them by Mr. Fox, who was an eminent Freemason and hence accustomed to public speaking; and then Mr. Willie would call up, one by one, all those who were not downright idiotic, and show off their learning. Some recited, some spelled hard words, some bounded Caroline county, Maryland, or Ohio, or Spain, some parsed all the components of such sentences as "The dog ate the bone," and some read in high-pitched, staccato, somewhat panicky voices out of the McGuffey Readers.

My own contribution to this symposium never took the form of a recitation, for, as I have said, I was born incapable of remembering anything longer than a limerick. Once, in term, Mr. Paul gave me a German poem of two brief stanzas to memorize, and I made such heavy weather of trying to get it that my father had to rescue me with a note to the old professor, desiring him to instruct Mr. Paul to lay off such infernal nonsense. (In those days, parents who patronized private schools had some voice in what their children were taught. On another occasion my father was full of indignation when I brought home the news that Mr. Paul believed and was teaching that the first *a* in *national* should be pronounced exactly like the first *a* in *nation*. Indeed, he was so upset that he made a call on the old professor the next morning, and was closeted with him for an hour. Mr. Paul, so far as I know, never formally recanted, but he at least went so far as to avoid the word thereafter.)

My own contribution to the annual exhibition usually took the form of a mathematical demonstration at the blackboard, say the multiplication of 75.876593 by 1129.654, or the division of $17/39$ ths by $71/163$ rds. I had no interest whatever in figures, but my father was a violent fan for them, so it gave him a great kick if I came out with an error of no more than plus-or-minus ten per cent., and when we got home he handed me a nickel, which in those days would buy a grab-bag containing at least half a pound of broken taffy and a ring or stickpin set with a large ruby.

My cousin Pauline, who was a very good reader, went through McGuffey at high speed, and my brother Charlie usually gave a more or less creditable performance at spelling, especially when the words lined out happened to be of less than two syllables. The other boys and girls displayed their various gifts one by one, and so the long morning wore on, with Mr. Willie sweating away doggedly, the boys scraping their feet on the floor and squirming in their chairs, and the parents (save when their own progeny were up) yawning dismally and rubbing themselves. As for the old professor, he invariably fell

into a quiet doze, with his gold-rimmed spectacles shoved up on his forehead. When the City Hall bell struck twelve and the noon whistles began to blow he awoke suddenly and half rose to his feet.

"Villie," he would say, "daash ish genook."

At all events, that is how it sounded to me, and how I recall it today. He was, as I have noted, a Suabian, and reverted to the dialect of his native *Dorf* whenever his faculties were dimmed. Mr. Willie understood him to say "Das ist genug," which, in English, is "That's enough," and so the proceedings terminated.

The boys always piled out leaping and howling like early Christian martyrs delivered by angels from the stake, for next day was the beginning of the Summer vacation.

LUDWIG LEWISOHN *The College of Queenshaven is the name given in Upstream by Ludwig Lewisohn (b. 1882) to the actual College of Charleston, which he attended before going up to Columbia for an advanced degree. Born in Berlin, he came to America at seven, and grew up in South Carolina. After teaching at Wisconsin and Ohio State, Lewisohn did free-lance writing and later became an associate editor of The Nation. Although the list of his works would fill a long column, space here permits only mention of such novels as The Case of Mr. Crump (1926) and Golden Vase (1931); and the outstanding Expression in America (1932), an unconventional, provocative, critical history of our literature, with sustained attack on our Puritan tradition as a stultifying force. Lewisohn has a knack of staying in the public prints; literary and domestic broils, trips to Europe, outspoken and frequent advocacy of Zionism, prolific writings, translations, criticism—all these have made him a significant, if erratic, figure on the modern American scene.*

THE MAKING OF AN ANGLO-AMERICAN

THE CAMPUS of the College of Queenshaven occupies several city blocks. Tall trees stand in it and the shadows of their branches tremble in the sunshine upon the Grecian portico and on the warm, brown walls of the old building. A place of peace—gentle with an eighteenth century repose. There are not students enough for boisterousness, no bleak or snowy weather ever adds a touch of roughness or hardship to the scene. No engineering courses had been established in my time; the chair of biology was practically vacant. We strolled across the campus learning to smoke cigarettes or pipes, reading our Latin or our English poets. Chemistry and mathematics

"The Making of an Anglo-American," from *Upstream* by Ludwig Lewisohn. Published by Harper & Brothers.

were the snakes in my Paradise. I could not crush them, but I tried to forget their existence except during the actual hours of recitation and laboratory practice. The latter were hideous. Outside the leaves fluttered and the swallows wheeled and poetry sounded with her golden voice. And I had to potter around with noxious and stenchful stuffs. Of the cosmic meaning of these experiments no one told me a word. What I have learned of the problem of matter as it affects our thinking concerning man and God I have learned for myself. I hated having to remember how you manufacture sulphuric acid or get zinc from its ore. But these troubles were small and transitory. If I had not been so long a pedagogue by trade, fiercely resentful of the time an unilluminating science-teaching steals from the humanities, these scars upon the memories of my college life would be forgotten. For that life was, upon the whole, happy and the sinister elements grew to be so only through their consequences.

My freshman year was marked by several radical and fortunate changes in the college. A new president was called: an energetic young man, a scholar and a thinker; my admirable old teacher of Latin was transferred from the high school to our college; a young man was brought from a Western university to fill the chair of English. The last event was the most important of all to me. For years Ferris was the dominant influence in my life. He more than anyone made me what I was during my early manhood. I bore him a true affection; I bear him that affection still. Deep, strange, silent things seemed to divide us for a time. But that division is over. We are today upon a firmer ground of friendship and understanding than ever before. Ferris was under thirty when he came to Queenshaven, but already his hair was completely white. His mouth was hidden under a drooping blond mustache; his prominent features were his sensitive nose, his high, fine, narrow forehead, his large violet-blue eyes. A fragile, gracious, spiritually virile figure—a trifle slovenly, unkempt, with an absorbed, aloof air that would yield to a very human, quaintly sweet smile. He was very shy and had a touch of irony in his speech. The average student didn't like him; to the exceptional student he came at once to mean much. To me—everything. I had had practically no instruction in English and Ferris took notice of me at once, of my ambition and of my talent. He taught me how to train myself to write; he gave me generously of his time; he paid my efforts the fine tribute of searching criticism and merciless veracity. During the four years that I was his pupil I do not think he praised me twice. But now and then a certain earnestness, almost solemnity would come into his eyes and then I knew that I had approached my goal a little nearer. For I recognized in him at once a singularly subtle and exquisitely tempered literary intelligence. Delicate in health, drifting through the years down the warm, enervating current of Queenshaven life, he has done nothing. I suppose he still sits by the library window or in his study, playing with a reed-stemmed clay-pipe, savoring with that wonderful esthetic taste of his the finest literature, planning a little and sinking back into his delicate Epicureanism. A stronger body, a rougher life, a goad of love

or hunger, a little less consciousness of gentility—and he might have been a master.

Gentility! He could not even in those years quite forget that his father, a professor at Washington college, had been a friend and colleague of General Lee and that he was a Virginian aristocrat. His mind had fared forth boldly on all the quests of man; apparently his intellectual flexibility and moral freedom were boundless. But at the slightest translation of that freedom into action, were it by so much as a vivid gesture, a spiritual discomfort seized him and the gentleman conquered the man. Since art means passion and since all passion has a touch of wildness, he was ever too much of a gentleman to be an artist. Not with his mind and heart, but with his unconquerable tribal self he always loved something else—a quiet manner, reserve of speech, an aristocratic nose—a little better than he loved truth or beauty. To illustrate the right humility before greatness he once told his students that he would have been glad to blacken Shakespeare's boots. He was quite sincere, but he would not have stood the test. The real Shakespeare—the morbid lover, the truant husband, the shabby actor, the poet whose divine energy of speech must have lent storm and flame to his daily discourse—that man would have filled Ferris with discomfort and dismay. . . . We saw a very great deal of each other in the course of the years and I know that his affection for me was very real. But he never, I think, quite forgave me for being what I am.

My mother, with a woman's sensitiveness, had a perception, unreasonable but very real, of the ultimate truth. At home I spoke of Ferris daily during my four years at college. He and his influence filled my life. And often my mother would hint at a touch of disloyalty in him to me. I always defended him hotly, and indeed her reasons were invariably quite wrong. But the sting of the situation was that I knew her to be in the right. In the best and deepest hours we spent together there was in him a shadow of withdrawal from me—a shadow of watchfulness, of guardedness. . . . A shadow, but it was there. He too must have realized it, must have reflected on it, for I also stood for something in his life, and I am unwilling to believe that such a nature as his yielded without a struggle to the injustice of its tribal self. That shadow, at all events, is gone now and it seems hateful to record it. But I must do so since during many years it remained in my mind as the symbol of an essential isolation.

2

Such feelings and reflections, of course, occupied my mind but at occasional, comfortless moments during my years at college. Had I been but a shade less sensitive, even these moments would have been spared me. My true life was given over to the absorption of Ferris' teaching, of his intimate, unspoken, but ever richly implied point of view. That point of view I can sum up in but one word, and that word is—England. His attitude to the intellectual and artistic life of America was a little detached, a little patronizing, a little

amused. The serious thing in American life to him was its continuing of those English social traditions within our older commonwealths of which he was the product. But the home of his soul and of his imagination was by some Surrey lane or Kentish field or Westmoreland lake. To me, whose love of English poetry had been so largely an esthetic rapture, he communicated those other and even richer associations which soon blended in my inner life, as they had done in his, into a spiritual loyalty to England that was all the deeper because we were forbidden the more obvious loyalties granted to her children and her citizens. We were glad and proud to be the dependents and colonials of that mighty mother from whom came the song and the beauty, the traditions and the fair imaginings that were the best of life to us. . . . Ferris knew both French and German well. But he read those foreign literatures with a cool and somewhat arrogant curiosity. And, during my boyish years, I absorbed that attitude as well.

England! How should I not have loved her? I knew nothing of life. And there were

The magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn—

there that road to Canterbury along which the immortal pilgrims fared; there were the gardens and the learned seats where Milton studied and Gray brooded and Tennyson wove those early all too golden verses; there was that other, lovelier city of the dreamy spires where Newman's voice floated through Saint Mary's chapel and the lad Arnold heard it and remembered it forever. There was that motley city of the thousand visions: Milton in blindness beholding the bowers of Paradise; Dryden at Will's coffee-house and Pope, a large-eyed, crooked child seeing the great, old man; Addison writing *The Campaign* in shabby lodgings; Johnson talking out of the depth of his noble, sombre heart; the fiery Hazlitt, the exquisite Lamb gathered about Coleridge in deep, heroic talk, and Shelley, wild-eyed, weaving here too the colors of his incomparable dreams. And far beyond the city were Windermere, clothed so truly to me in

A light that never was on sea or land
The consecration and the poet's dream,

and, most sacred of all and most beloved—Laleham churchyard where Arnold sleeps. How faint these fragments of that imaginative vision of England! I summon it before me again as it arose in my soul in those impressionable years in all its storied wealth, in all its singing splendor. No bodily eye was needed. I knew the whiteness of the Dover cliffs, the "league-long rollers" on the Isle of Wight, the sylvan Wye "that wanderer through the woods," and that

wet, bird-haunted, English lawn

the thought of which came with a pang of beauty which was almost pain. What wonder that in my mind, taking color from my friend's, this England,

this land of the soul, became indissolubly one with that British empire which we conceived of as spreading the noble things we loved to the ends of the earth. We rejoiced, like the very children of her soil, in her "far-flung battle line," and like the poet she drove out and killed, heard with our very ears and with our very hearts

The measured roll of English drums
Beat at the gates of Kandahar.

In 1898 or 1899 I read an article on Kipling in the *Quarterly Review*. I took his books from the library and was at once drawn into the full current of British imperialism. Of his verses, though I admired and imitated them, I always had a lurking, unadmitted doubt. But the stories took me by storm. And the best of them are, indeed, beyond praise in their magnificent concreteness, their Homeric freshness. The shallowness and meanness of the man's outlook on life were quite beyond my perception. I let what is surely the enduring part of him persuade me to accept not only the artist but also the politician. I heartily believed a Little Englander to be a fool and a contemptible fool; I conceived of the Boers not as obstacles to conquest and rapacity but to the spreading of a heaven-sent light. I believed that America was, by virtue of our community of speech and literature with England, a sharer in this light which was to be forcibly shed upon all the dark places of the earth, and I found it hard to forgive William Vaughan Moody for counseling us in his great Ode Written In A Time Of Hesitation to let the island men of the Philippines go free. . . . I found the other day, among old papers, a manuscript ode to England which I wrote when I was eighteen. I remember that Ferris praised it and, indeed, the verses are not without merit. But it interested me as confirming so thoroughly the facts in my development which I have here set down. I was a Pan-Angle of the purest type; so was Ferris, so were my classmates—lads of English and Anglicized French Huguenot descent—so were the half dozen cultivated lawyers and business men and journalists in the community who, about this time, began to take an interest in me and in my work. All, at least, except one. But he, a wealthy Jewish physician who had turned Methodist in his boyhood, avoided all questionable subjects, prayed at love feasts in church and, though he surreptitiously distributed alms among the poor Jews of the city, achieved a complete conformity of demeanor. My father, furthermore, became as fervid an admirer of Kipling as myself. The poet's politics he scarcely noted, for he had not my inner reasons for a blind adherence to that faith. He did not want to be an English poet. . . . Acquaintances, with a warning gravity of demeanor, whispered to me later that I haven't a sense of what England stands for in the world. Who was ever firmer in that faith? Not Eliot nor Hibben nor a wilderness of blood-thirsty professors. Only I've done a little living, a little thinking . . . especially a little thinking since. That grave look in my friends' eyes which used to impress me seems like the blank gravity of idiot children. . . .

3

I still, during these years, attended the Methodist church, taught Sunday School and was a leader in the Epworth League. I did this partly because, up to my junior year, my Christian faith, though cooler, was still unshaken, partly through the influence and friendship of the physician whom I have mentioned, but also because I found a good deal of unreserved human friendliness among these people. And I needed this. The relations between my class-mates and myself were very cordial; several of them often visited me as I did them. Yet there always came a point at which I felt excluded. They themselves belonged to a definite social group. They neither drew me into this group nor did they have the good sense or good feeling to be silent before me concerning these more intimate affairs. I do not think their exclusion of me was at all a matter of reason or determination; it was quite instinctive. By virtue of my work on the college magazine and the attitude of the professors toward me, they respected me. Personally they liked me well enough and elected me, without hesitation, in due time, president of our literary society and editor-in-chief of the magazine. As tribesmen their resistance to me was tacit but final. A pushing or insinuating fellow might, assuredly, have made his way. But my sensitiveness was so alert that I, no doubt, at times created division by suspecting it and at once shrinking away. But of the fundamental fact there could be no doubt. It was terribly confirmed to me by an incident in my senior year. I was the most prominent student on the campus. My classmates called themselves my friends—voluntarily and without my seeking. And these very friends gathered to form the first chapter of a Greek-letter fraternity at our college and—left me out. I did not know then that the fraternities do not admit Jews. I do not know now whether they practice this exclusion tacitly or by regulation. I never spoke of the incident either at school or at home. Our president who founded the chapter does not know to this day that I so much as observed the matter. I did, with a profound discouragement, with a momentary grim prevision of the future which I fought bitterly to blot out lest I should lose all my hopes and see all my life crumble before me at eighteen. I withdrew into myself with sullen pride and intensified ambition, convinced that the incident was local, exceptional, unrepresentative, and un-American. Such was my simple faith. . . .

Gradually, too, I was losing the satisfaction that I had once taken in the society of my Methodist friends. For in my eighteenth year the world began to clear for me. Until then my passion for literature had been so exclusive that neither my reasoning power nor my power of observation had developed. These were now somewhat suddenly awakened and were the source of constant, sharp revelations. I remember a garden party given by a bishop's widow to the young people of the Epworth League. It was a very charming garden with beds full of old-fashioned flowers; honeysuckle and clematis covered the piazza that gave on the lawn. There were chairs and tables and ice-cream and cakes were served by girls dressed in white. The glint of the sunlight on

their smooth hair and the rustle of their starched skirts gave me a faint, sensuous pleasure. And one of the girls had a slow, liquid laugh. The young men, in duck trousers and blue coats, were clerks, with a sprinkling of students from a Methodist college. For almost the first time I listened to the talk objectively—the kind of talk carried on a thousand times a day in a thousand American communities. It was mostly what is known as chaff, feeble to the point of imbecility. How could these people laugh at it? Laugh they did. But the laughter though loud was without true mirth. For that requires a vigor either of mind or temper that was far to seek. It was all witless, stale and puerile beyond conception—refined through sheer weakness, well-mannered and yet incurably ill-bred. The pastor went from table to table—a tall, bony, large-mouthed man. He spoke of the beauty of the afternoon and of the delightfulness of seeing young people so happy. His long, pale lips writhed in smiles over his jagged teeth. As he pressed my hand all I could think of was his fondness for talking about purity, and of his wife, emaciated with child-bearing, and their six or seven small, depressed children. . . . A withered, eager, bead-eyed spinster told of a friend of hers who was a missionary in Mexico. I wondered if the Mexicans, though less hygienic and refined, weren't in all likelihood more interesting and vital than the spinster and her friend. If they were ignorant, it was the ignorance of a primitive folk. These people who held Genesis to be a scientific document and whined over the damnation of the heathen were ignorant by temperament, profession, and pig-headedness. I couldn't tear myself away until the party broke up at sunset, because the girls uttered their inanities with such sweet lips and such pallid teeth. But I went home alone through the lovely dusk of Queenshaven and my mind recorded one of the earliest judgments that marked the passing of the boy into the man.

But my growing isolation was more than compensated for by a new joy in thought—its purity and hardihood and strength. My father, wearying of my dogmatic assents, insisted on my reading Fiske's *Cosmic Philosophy*. I have not seen the book in years. I do not know what I would think of it now. But it was an admirable choice for an awakening intellect. I read it with an icy fervor. A cool, strong light seemed to irradiate my mind. This picture of the universe was so overwhelmingly and evidently nearer the truth than that represented by Christian doctrine that all my emotional forts collapsed at once. I proceeded to read Huxley and Darwin, Draper and Lecky. Yet I held very fast to my faith in God and immortality and I still prayed in the silences of my mind, though I could not have justified the habit on any intellectual basis. Nor did I doubt the correctness and elevation of that system of Christian morals under which we live. In a word, my attitude was that of so many thousands of semi-educated Americans: I was rather proud of my breadth of view on matters of theology and failed quite to suspect my refusal to think on other matters of far more pressing practical import. I would have felt quite at home in that half-way house of the mind—Unitarianism. And indeed, some years later, I did sustain a brief and tentative connection with that respectable form of faith.

4

During the last two years of my college course my plans for the future became more definite. I "majored" in English and having taken all the courses the college offered, my friend Ferris gave several courses, both philological and literary, for me alone and thus enabled me to do a year's graduate work while I was still an undergraduate. I must emphasize the fact that both he and several other professors (who were my thorough friends) aided and encouraged me in every way and clearly took it for granted that I would encounter no hardship in entering the academic profession as a teacher of the English language and literature. My father and mother were also well content with my plan; their Jewish respect for the dignity and authority of the academic life increased their satisfaction.

I can say frankly—since my present self is so far removed from that old, boyish self in Queenshaven with its deep faith and ardor—that I prepared myself for my chosen calling in no common way. I read English literature with a white heat of passion; the lamp in my bed-room burned dry night after night. By the time I was nineteen I had read and re-read and pondered all the great things in English literature from Chaucer to Kipling, and I had read many authors of the second and third rank—Jonson and Donne, Marvell and Crashaw, Herrick and Vaughan, Prior and Gay and Tickell, Collins and Smart, Crabbe and Cowper and Hogg, even Bowles and Lloyd, Patmore and Frederick Tennyson, Clough and Beddoes and Locker-Lampson down to Lang and Austin Dobson and, of course, the immediate contemporaries. Yet these names are but a few and written down at random. The works of the great poets, even of those who like Landor are aside from the beaten road, had entered into my very being. . . . I have had little time to read English poetry of late years. I do not need to. I dip into my memory and those immortal numbers sound upon my inner ear! The early books and the seventh of *Paradise Lost*, the *Epistle to Augustus*, *Adonais* and the *Nightingale Ode*, *Kubla Khan* and *Work Without Hope*, *Tintern Abbey* and the *Ode* and the *Sonnets*, *The Lotus-Eaters* and *Ulysses*, *The Last Ride Together* and *A Grammarian's Funeral*, *Thyrsis* and *The Scholar Gypsy*, *The Blessed Damozel* and *Jenny*, *A Forsaken Garden* and the elegy on Baudelaire and the long, dreamy, murmuring melodies—like the wash of a summer sea—of *The Earthly Paradise*. . . . In prose I was not so well grounded. But I knew the greater prose-men of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially my old favorites Swift and Johnson, and the object of my latest and deepest enthusiasm in college, Matthew Arnold, reasonably well and the novelists from Fielding to George Eliot intimately. And I had read all the histories of English literature available and dozens of volumes of critical essays and most of the chief biographies from Boswell to Lord Tennyson's life of his father. Once, when my eyes were being treated, my mother read to me the whole of Dowden's *Shelley* and of Trevelyan's *Macaulay*. . . .

I have mentioned Matthew Arnold. My father discovered the volume containing *Culture and Anarchy* and *Friendship's Garland* and urged me to read it. I felt the impact of a kindred mind and the book became one of my deepest experiences, although its full import was revealed to me only years later. I read all of Arnold over and over again and I still think him the clearest-souled Englishman of his century. And finally there came—as was inevitable—Pater and Stevenson as the last word in that other great art of prose which I now took almost as seriously as the greater art of verse. I took delight in the tales of Stevenson. But it was characteristic of my youth and its environment that his essays seemed to me not only charmingly written—(they are, though with too obvious a display of dexterity)—but wonderfully rich in wisdom. . . . Recently, at odd moments of leisure, I have been reading Hazlitt again. Almost more than any other English writer he gives, in a voice so little muffled by the grave as almost to ring in one's ears, the deep sense of the texture and savor, the stir and pang of life. Regret and longing, the glory and the disillusion—what poet has rendered them with a more piercing note? Withal his voice is always manly, direct, tempered by some tonic quality within. In my college days I preferred Stevenson. I did not see that Stevenson paints life and feeling in but a few colors. These are bright and very engaging and delicately used. But they fill in a pattern quite arbitrary and unreal. The sentiments and ideals correspond to no well-considered vision of the world. They are like the pipings of some splendid bird in a world all dawn—a world that will never know the heat of noon with its ardor of passion and pain or the dark of night with its contemplation and its faltering hope. . . .

Meanwhile I read both verse and prose, not yielding blindly to the easy and abundant inspiration of youth, but curbing that inspiration and guiding it with severe and fastidious care. The uncriticalness of Southern culture confirmed me in demanding the utmost exactions of myself. There was a terrible lot of facile and amorphous talking and writing. An eighteenth-centuryish type of oratory still thrived in Queenshaven. Whenever its echo reached me I re-read Gautier's stanzas on art and tightened the girdle about my loins.

I have recently looked at some thousands of manuscript verses of that period. The poems are full of rhythmic ardor, yet never without restraint. There are good lines and happy turns of expression and there is no lack of imagination. Yet the stuff is quite worthless. For it is merely, as Arthur Symonds wrote me years later (not of my own work) "poetizing about the old subjects in as nearly as possible the old way." There is no directness of speech because there was, after all, no directness of vision. It is all remote and unreal. Mere "literature" in the sense of Verlaine. Without the learned renaissance tradition of English poetry from Surrey to Swinburne the verses were unthinkable. With that tradition and its results extant they were superfluous. But they illustrate how I lived and moved and had my being in the cultural tradition of the Anglo-Saxon aristocrat. I was of those who "speak the tongue that Shakespeare spoke, the faith and morals hold that Milton held" . . .

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Does all that sound priggish? It was saved from priggishness, I believe, by its passion, by its inevitableness. There was no blemish of worldly ambition in it all. I thirsted to know, I hungered to create. But I had, all during my sophomore and junior years, another preoccupation, a humbler and, perhaps, a more human one. There was a girl . . . I saw her one day at Sunday School. I met her that week at the Epworth League. Straightway something within me began to ache with a very definite, small, sharp, insistent ache. For two years I had to study very hard or write very feverishly to deaden that pain. Reason and self-persuasion were quite powerless against it. Love at first sight: a very powerful instinct of sexual selection. Each phrase expresses half of the intense reality. The girl was short and rather plump, she had a skin of fine texture, small, white, mouse-like teeth, pale, brown hair, good eyes of grey with long lashes, but a small, prim, cool mouth. She wasn't pretty. Heaven knows she wasn't clever. Her mother and her older sister illustrated with deadly precision what she was certain to become. And I saw all this and nursed no illusions and yet a smile from her would ease me for a day and failure to see her would throw me into helpless agony. I was intensely jealous of her, though I knew her to be quite innocent, not even given to flirting, and though she was obviously anxious to give me every encouragement permitted by a very strict maidenly propriety. What was that chilly preference to my fever and my pain? This experience aroused in me, even in the midst of my suffering, my earliest reflections—vague and inconclusive and rendered futile, of course, by my gentlemanly conservatism—on a tremendous problem. If by any queer and unthinkable chance I could have married the girl, I would have done so—young and penniless and helpless as I was. The knowledge that such a step would have ruined me would not have deterred me for a moment. I wanted her so! It was a good thing, then, that society and custom and parental authority made such a step impossible. On the other hand, it seemed a raw cruelty that the passion of love at its freshest and most vigorous should be a festering spear in the flesh of youth. What a problem! What a world! . . . At the end of the second year I succeeded, by the severest self-discipline, in freeing myself measurably from this torment. I deliberately went out a good deal with a vivid little beauty in whom a quiver of passion constantly fought against but never overcame reserve and principle. She was worth a dozen of the other kind. Yet until I left college I had to avoid that fatal girl with the round shoulders and the dreary mouth lest I should feel again the old, miserable, sickening ache. I marvel how with that scourge upon me I could work so very intensely and continuously. But, though I had next to no worldly ambition, I was anxious to get through college.

I had a deep and urgent motive. I began to see how the Queenshaven life was gradually telling on my father and mother. To my love of them was added a compassion that shook me to the roots of my being and a deadly fear that in my race against time and circumstance, my race for their welfare and their

future, I might arrive too late. I began to perceive objectively how the meanness and the humiliations of my father's business were beginning to shake his judgment and to exasperate his moods; how solitariness and repression were whitening my mother's hair. Her face retained its girlish bloom and freshness almost to the threshold of old age. She had hardly a wrinkle when she died. But during my years at college her hair turned quite white and my old terror for her became intensified.

But I must not give the impression that our home life was altogether gloomy. After all we had one another and there were many cheerful hours and days. We were poor but never to the point of penury. A fine care and wise frugality, especially characteristic of my mother, made the modest income suffice for all decent necessities and my studies and development were not interrupted by any material cares. I sometimes thought our diet monotonous. I didn't always like my clothes. But essentially my indifference to such things was quite serene. My father and mother, moreover, were full of hope. My progress was obvious; my teachers constantly impressed upon them the belief that I had an enviable future before me. I had, too, an excellent friend on the *Queenshaven Courier*, a clever man, almost my father's age, who reprinted my verses in the paper, got me to write articles and book-reviews and so, almost insensibly, I became quite a figure in that small, compact community. . . . How little that meant, how in spite of fair seeming and fair speech all forces were arrayed against me, I did not know until several years had passed. . . .

I recall a moonlit, starry night in May. My father had gone to a lodge meeting. My mother and I paced the piazza together, as was our wont. It was a few weeks before my graduation. We spoke long and quietly of the past and of the future—of my hopes which seemed well-justified, of the important day that was coming. We both went to rest, I know, with a real serenity of soul. . . . More than once later she recalled that evening to me and asked me whether I remembered it. Remember it! I shall see those stars and the shadows on the verandah and her eyes in the dusk until I see nothing more forever. But the last time she asked me I feigned forgetfulness. I was beyond all speech. For the hopes had gone down in shame and frustration and on her face was the mark of death. . . .

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My graduation was made a notable event in our small circles. All the leading citizens of the town are alumni of the college and are proud of its work and its traditions. So they had followed my writings in the magazine and in the papers, and when I took two degrees and delivered a commencement oration which, for once, made some concessions in manner to the more florid type of Southern oratory, they had a moment of enthusiasm over me. This enthusiasm was shared by the press of *Queenshaven* and by my class-mates. I was a bit more of a hero than the youth who wins a series of important foot-ball games for his university. It was a very great day for me and an even greater

day for my parents: the happiest they had known in years, the happiest they were ever to know again. Under the influence of this wave of communal approbation a board of Episcopal clergymen elected me to the chair of English in a local academy. But the aged clergyman to whom the school really belonged arose from a bed of illness and removed the trustees he had himself appointed for electing a person distasteful to him. He used this expression quite openly in a letter to the *Courier*. The gentlemen on the board, however, wrote me apologetic letters and my friends and parents agreed that it wasn't, after all, my ambition to teach in a denominational school. Besides, I was only just nineteen and the world seemed all before me where to choose. . . . By Ferris' advice I registered in several teachers' agencies and sent my master's thesis to a scholarly journal by which it was duly accepted for publication.

The long summer weeks dragged on and nothing happened. One New England teachers' agency did, indeed, suggest a place or two but nothing came of my applications. Ferris assured me by letter that this lack of success was due to my youth and inexperience. Since he had counselled me from the first to apply for a fellowship or scholarship in one of the large graduate schools of the east, I accepted his explanation for these happenings as well as for other experiences that came when I applied for school positions within the state. His advice was that I should stay at home for a year, pursue my studies and write a few more scholarly papers to submit with my fellowship applications the following spring. My father, ever the soul of unworldliness in money matters, agreed heartily to this plan and my mother was glad that she could have me with her for another year.

That year stands out in my memory as a pleasant one. I saw little of anyone except Ferris, but I was quite free to devote myself to the cultivation of my tastes. And I wrote my first extensive piece of work: an essay in biography and criticism about fifty thousand words in length. Ferris pronounced it well-grounded and well-written—a notable piece of work for a mere youth. So when April came I applied for fellowships at Harvard and Columbia and both Ferris and I were hopeful of the results. From both universities, however, I received only pleasant acknowledgements of the work I had sent in support of my applications, an invitation to pursue my graduate studies and regrets that neither a fellowship nor a scholarship was available. This was a hard blow. It was obvious that I could not go on living on my father's kindness. On the contrary, I was passionately anxious to help him and my mother to free themselves from the bonds of their Queenshaven life. I did not speak of this, for I did not want to render their consciousness of it more acute. But it weighed on me heavily. I thought and thought and came to a resolve which many American youths take lightly enough, but which cost me infinite hesitation and pain: I would borrow money. The notion of working my way through the graduate course never occurred to me. For I was not concerned with textbooks or, primarily, with degrees, but with a life to be lived, an absorption and dedication to be accomplished. And this never presented itself to my mind as possible upon any terms but those of a complete release from sordid preoccupations.

Unhappily for me the wealthy Jewish physician of my Methodist days had recently died. Had he been alive my way would have been easier. I felt close to him and he was kind and generous. As it was, I had to go to other prominent citizens and alumni of the college. These men had all liked me and made much of me for years; I felt quite at home with them in all essential matters and yet it was a terrible struggle. I put off my errand from day to day; I went to the door of some office and hadn't the courage to enter. A sensation of physical nausea and of burning shame overwhelmed me. . . . I have never been able to feel differently. If I must ask for something, however clear my right to make the demand or the request, the old, sickening misery comes over me and I am helpless, stupid, stammering, absurd. For the sake of others I have had to ask things since then. For myself I would never have the strength to face that sense of spiritual nakedness and abasement. Perhaps it is from this native feeling that there has grown my passion for justice. The more just we are to our fellowmen, the less need we wound and degrade them with our wretched mercy. True justice—I do not mean the tribal errors or capitalistic voracities of our legal and moral codes—true justice need not be tempered by mercy. It excludes the necessity for mercy. You do not need to be merciful until you have ceased to be just . . . !

The Queenshaven gentlemen, it is but fair to add, made my dreadful task comparatively easy. Several of them met to discuss the matter and made up for me a loan of three hundred and fifty dollars. I had really wanted six hundred to see me through the year at Columbia, since the tuition alone was a hundred and fifty. But wild horses, in the vivid old phrase, could have dragged no further begging from my lips. I thanked them with what grace I could master and proceeded to get ready for my great adventure.

Let anyone who has an unclouded vision of our American life, and not least of the academic part of it, consider my undertaking. How often since have I reflected on it, sometimes in a mood of bitterness, sometimes in one of irony. I had lived utterly for the things of the mind and the emotions. I was twenty years old and knew less of practical matters than many a child of ten. I had no social adroitness but the most quivering sensitiveness and pride. I was passionately Anglo-American in all my sympathies, I wanted above all things to be a poet in the English tongue, and my name and physiognomy were characteristically Jewish. I had ill-cut, provincial clothes and just money enough to get through one semester. Such was my inner and outer equipment for pursuing in a metropolitan graduate school the course which was to lead to a college appointment to teach English. No one warned me, no one discouraged me. It seems incredible that Ferris had no inkling of the quality of my undertaking. But he, too, kept silent. So I faced the future with a steady hopefulness. Only when I sought to grasp what separation from my mother would mean to her and me did my heart sink. We tried to comfort each other, she and I, by dwelling upon the certainty of a successful career for myself. But during the last days we gave up these feeble and hollow efforts and fell quite silent before our unavertible fate.

ELAINE BROWN KEIFFER *Shortly after her graduation from Sarah Lawrence College, Miss Keiffer began to work for Life as a researcher, starting with the "Life Goes to a Party" department. She moved from there to the "Close-up" section where she did the research for the articles on Jinx Falkenburg and Juan Trippe, and went to the Bahamas to gather information on the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. The following article appeared as a "Close-up" under her name. Miss Keiffer later transferred to Time where she headed the section called "Wartime Living," thereafter returning to Life to work with Editor John Chamberlain on Washington stories. This assignment produced features on Lord Halifax, Anna Roosevelt Boettiger, Eric Johnston and the Supreme Court. Miss Keiffer has recently married and left Life's staff.*

MADAME RUBINSTEIN

PRECISELY at 7 A.M., without benefit of clock or call, Princess Gourielli-Tchkonia opens her sharp brown eyes, stretches her solid frame and sits up in her fluorescent lucite bed. A moment later a maid enters, breathing "Good morning, Princess," and bearing half a grapefruit. The Princess eats her grapefruit, reads her mail and two New York newspapers and then has a second tray, with black coffee and whole wheat toast. Next she gets out of bed and into her Apple Blossom Foambath where, as she soaks, she does her best thinking of the day. Full of thoughts, she gets out, dries herself with a towel bearing the initials of her first husband (a Mr. Titus), rubs liquid powder over her body and studies her face in a mirror bearing the crest of her present husband (the Prince). From her wardrobe she takes a bizarre Schiaparelli dress whose broad stripes go round and round her short figure. From a glittering drawerful of jewels she selects an emerald necklace, big diamond earrings, pearl rope bracelets and a pair of heavy ruby rings. Then, after refreshing herself by gazing for a moment at assorted masterpieces by Picasso, the Princess steps forth between the two wooden carousel horses which guard the entrance to her Greenwich, Conn., home. Her gardener, the maid's husband, is waiting in his ancient Pierce-Arrow to take her to town.

Some 50 minutes later the gardener pulls up in front of a chaste little white stone building at No. 715 Fifth Avenue. "We're a few minutes early, Princess," the gardener says. "Good morning, Madame Rubinstein," says the doorman.

Thus, leaving her recently acquired title in the gardener's car, Helena Rubinstein goes to work under the name which she has made a boudoir word in four dozen countries and millions of homes. The sleek little salon in New York is the capital of the worldwide beauty business which she built and now runs with autocratic success.

Beauty is a commodity. It comes in jars and tubes and boxes and bottles and metal cylinders. It claims among its customers perhaps 75 per cent of the women of the U. S. It adds up, with all its ramifications of beauty parlors and perfume counters, to one of the 20 largest industries in the U. S., ranking just below rubber. In this business Helena Rubinstein started when she was a girl of 18 and through it she has become perhaps the world's most successful businesswoman.

She began life as one of eight daughters of a moderately well-to-do Jewish family in Krakow, Poland. Her career, however, began in Melbourne, Australia. She had gone there to visit relatives and noticed how the faces of Australian women, dried and roughened by the climate, contrasted with her own creamy complexion. The Australian women noticed it too and began to borrow some of the cream she had brought from Poland. Exercising for the first time her uncanny talent for sniffing a profit a mile away, Helena Rubinstein sent back to Krakow for a shipment of cream and opened a shop. So fast did her trade grow that in a year and a half, at the age of 19, she left Australia with \$100,000 capital to launch her business in Europe.

During her 43 years in business, Rubinstein has made, according to her own estimate, a net \$25,000,000. This has come entirely from the sale of creams and lotions, at fancy prices, across the counters of stores. Yet in the language of the beauty business Helena Rubinstein, Inc. is distinguished as a "treatment house." The Rubinstein salons in New York, Chicago, Boston, Toronto, Miami Beach, Palm Beach, Paris, Milan, Buenos Aires, Melbourne, Sydney, San Francisco and Beverly Hills, all of which lose money, exist to promote the Rubinstein line and to assure its standing in the topmost bracket of a snobbish industry.

Behind its slick façade, the Fifth Avenue salon is a super-garage and repair shop for feminine faces and bodies. Here, in the Rubinstein "Day of Beauty," ladies are stretched, exercised, rubbed, scrubbed, wrapped in hot blankets, bathed in infra-red rays, massaged dry and massaged under water, and bathed in milk—all before lunch. After a meal of raw things they get a face treatment, foot masque, wax fingertip masque, scalp treatment, shampoo and coiffure by Michel. The whole thing costs \$25.

Among these leisured ladies under repair, Helena Rubinstein moves with the superior air of a self-made businesswoman, and with now and again a faint chuckle. As for herself, she has neither time nor desire for such strenuous beautification. Her only personal beauty practice is to lunch daily in her Zurich Room restaurant, on a "health diet" of leeks, kale, kohlrabi and the like, from which she gets up hungry.

Having the typical neurosis of Napoleonic characters—claustrophobia—Madame cannot stand small rooms. She sits in a large office, wishing it were larger, at a desk too high for her. When she wants to make a good first impression on an important visitor she calls for a cushion and places it under her, letting her short legs dangle in the air. This kind of self-promotion is by now so automatic that Madame hardly realizes she does it.

Rubinstein holds her position at the top of the business by a combination

of hard work, showmanship and great money shrewdness. "Too much," is her automatic reaction to any proposition or price. As one of her former associates comments: "If somebody offered Rubinstein a package of gum for a nickel she would say 'too much' in the hope that it was the only package of gum in the world that could be bought for four cents."

Madame's way with money, moreover, goes far beyond pinching pennies. She has an innate talent for finance on a grand scale, as the partners of the Wall Street firm of Lehman Bros. found out with painful surprise twelve years ago. "Madame Rubinstein is financially illiterate," they still say sourly, and they wince at the memory of how the little lady from Poland, who doesn't know a sinking fund from a vanishing cream, outsmarted their great banking house.

The deal was the Lehmans' idea, not Madame's. In the rosy days of 1928 the Lehmans conceived the idea of buying the Rubinstein business and turning it into a low-price, mass-production line. Madame finally agreed and sold two-thirds of the U. S. business to Lehman Bros. for \$7,300,000 cash, keeping her foreign business. For about a year Madame sat by, watching two successive managers carry out the Lehman ideas, "selling my creams in grocery stores," as she piteously puts it. Then she went to the stockholders with the cry that the business was being ruined. The Lehmans offered her any salary if she would go away and leave them alone, but Madame had a better idea. The market had crashed and Rubinstein stock, which the Lehmans had put on the market at \$70 a unit, was now selling for \$20. Madame bought back enough of the stock in the open market for \$1,500,000, to regain control of her business and at the same time pocketed a cool \$5,800,000 on the deal. By that time the Lehmans were glad to be rid of the whole business.

The Rubinstein line now comprises 629 items. There are 62 creams, 78 powders, 46 perfumes, colognes and eaux de toilette, 69 lotions, and 115 lipsticks, plus smaller numbers of soaps, rouges, eye shadows, and so forth. This is the largest line in the business—too large according to Madame, who sometimes looks with envy on the great business that Pond's built on a single cream (it now has four). The best-selling cream is still the one Rubinstein started out with. Known throughout Europe as Valaze Cream, it was introduced in the U. S. as Skin Clearing Cream. In 1938, in accordance with a ruling of the Food and Drug Administration, the name was changed again, to Wake-up Cream. Rubinstein girls sometimes tell their customers that all 629 items are necessary to provide every woman with just the right preparations for her particular beauty needs, but the real reason for the big line is Madame's determination to keep ahead of Elizabeth Arden with new creams and lipsticks.

In the high-price field, Arden is Rubinstein's great competitor. The two lines use the same high quality of ingredients and sell for about the same price, though Rubinstein's profit margin is probably larger because of less lavish packaging. For some mysterious reason the Arden line seems to have a slight edge in prestige, a fact infuriating to Madame. Perhaps it is the fancier name, perhaps Arden's head start in the U. S. market, perhaps the Arden décor which runs to pastels while Rubinstein uses stronger colors. At any rate, sales

girls report that customers will often buy Rubinstein preparations for themselves but Arden preparations for gifts.

The rivalry with Arden is the chief spur in Rubinstein's life. "They maintain equally swank salons a block apart on Fifth Avenue and their products are sold side by side on the nation's beauty counters. If one gets a new idea such as the "Day of Beauty" or suntan lotion or photographic makeup, it is no time at all before the other adopts it. They swap employes, copy packages and borrow advertising angles. They give parties for the same people, go to the same openings, deal with the same companies.

Yet Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden have never met. Madame is very specific about the point. "Vee haf been at zee same parties, yes," she states carefully, "but vee haf nevair met—nevair."

Rubinstein and Arden have for years waged a sharp war over personnel, featured chiefly by Arden raids on the Rubinstein girls. This reached a climax in 1938 when Arden hired away Rubinstein's general manager, a Mr. Johnson, at a salary of \$50,000 a year, and took eleven of his staff to boot. Rubinstein had failed to retaliate on previous occasions, in the belief that it was cheaper to train new personnel, but this bold raid was too much. For a year she plotted a revenge which, when it came, was beyond doubt the neatest coup in the history of the beauty business. Up to 1934 Arden's general manager had been her first husband, a jovial, energetic man named T. J. Lewis who ran the Arden business in its lushest years. Arden simultaneously divorced and fired him in 1934, but she cagily wrote a clause into the divorce agreement by which he agreed not to re-enter the beauty business for five years. In 1939 the five years were up and it became Madame's exquisite pleasure to announce that the ex-husband of Elizabeth Arden was the new manager of Helena Rubinstein.

There is still only one boss in the House of Rubinstein and that is "the Madame," as her staff calls her. "You must be vairee smaart," she insists in her Polish-French-Australian accent, "vairee clevar. In ziss bissness you must vork 24 hours a day and 300 years in a lifetime." She complains constantly that she can find no one to work as hard as she does. The truth probably is that there are not many women like Madame and most men do not find an atmosphere conducive to their best work in the tight little matriarchy of the beauty business.

"Vot I am rheerly gude at," Madame says, "iss promotion." In the cold estimate of the beauty business she speaks the truth. When it comes to getting out a new line such as the House of Rubinstein launches every few months, Madame is a downright whiz.

The most recent of these is the Heaven-Sent line which came out last spring. Preparations for this promotion began in January 1940, fifteen months before it appeared on the market. Since her last promotion had been Apple Blossom, Madame decided to make this one "not a floral odor but a subtle blending." For colors she picked pink, blue and white. In the next few months Madame sniffed and rejected some 800 odors, from oil houses and her own laboratory, before she finally fixed on one. According to her admiring employes it was Madame who exclaimed, "This is a heavenly scent," thus suggesting the name

which finally came out Heaven-Sent. Heaven-Sent was to be in four items: eau de toilette, dusting powder, bath oil and soap. The next step was to get a general decorative motif. Beginning with the cologne bottle, Madame called in a bottle manufacturer and asked him to design a bottle suggesting a feminine figure, "with a light feeling." When the model came back, Madame made two changes, putting pleats in the skirt and adding a round stopper to suggest a head. The soap was next. Madame chose a cake in the form of a puffy pink cloud, with white raised angels on the surface. An artist then went to work on boxes, which were to feature angel figures. Madame rejected the first design, with plain angels, as too austere and finally settled on a pattern of angels and clouds.

Heaven-Sent was now ready and Madame turned her attention to marketing. The campaign was brilliantly launched on March 31 when 500 pink-and-blue balloons with the Heaven-Sent angel motif were dropped from the roof of Bonwit Teller's store, each with a wicker basket containing a vial of cologne and the message: "Out of the Blue to You." Several hundred women filled Fifth Avenue to grab for them.

Rubinstein's greatest promotion, however, is undoubtedly herself. She has made herself not only a multimillionairess but a lady scientist and a figure of international glamor. Madame's personal promotion is, in fact, an essential part of her business success.

For the counter girls who sell Rubinstein products in 2,700 U. S. stores, the house publishes a monthly *Beauty News*. A typical issue inquires: "Dear girls . . . Do you make your customers see the real Mme Rubinstein? . . . She has an earnest and sincere desire to help every woman attain the beauty which can be hers."

For years no Rubinstein advertisement ever appeared in the U. S. press without a picture of Madame, usually in a chemical laboratory. Madame thinks this is much more honest than the Elizabeth Arden advertisements which use a mask of a beautiful woman in white veils. "People think it's Arden," Madame says indignantly. "It isn't Arden at all. Arden doesn't look like that." In Rubinstein advertisements Madame is portrayed as "one of the great women scientists of the world," engaged in a ceaseless search for more magical beauty ointments. This picture is so convincing that salon patrons sometimes plead with the operators for some extra special beauty cream which the public cannot buy. If the customer insists, the operators may sell the lady an unlabeled jar for \$50 with the whispered assurance that it is "Madame's own cream."

Until the war Madame was a constant traveler on the international glamor circuit. She maintained five homes—in Paris, Combs-la-Ville, London, New York and Greenwich—and crossed from Europe to America six to eight times a year, holding for a while the Atlantic crossing record. These trips enabled her to visit her salons but, more important, they afforded her occasions to be photographed, to issue statements and to show off her latest acquisitions of art, jewelry, and clothes. Always she was dressed in the most spectacular of Schiaparelli or Molyneux creations, with great blobs of jewelry. She seldom got off

a boat without bringing forth the emerald necklace of the Empress Catherine or carrying radio-active bath bricks or announcing with breathless importance that green face powder was being worn in Paris. When she visited India it was made known that Madame had devised a special cream, Pomade Noire, for the muddy complexions of maharanees who, in return, had laden her with jewels.

Madame's fine collections, though carried on as a hobby, are also good for publicity. Her jewelry collection, worth \$1,000,000, is an astonishing hodge-podge of the real and the fake, the good and the bad. It includes exquisite diamond pieces, ropes of flawed emeralds, gorgeous rubies, off-color pearls by the yard and ten-cent store junk, all piled helter-skelter in a metal filing case.

As a collector, Madame is a female small-scale Hearst. She has bought all her life, shrewdly but without time to choose and discriminate. She has bought to help out poor artists and to be in on fads of the moment and simply because she saw a good bargain. Her collection of modern French art contains, along with a good deal of plain junk, enough first-rate painting to make it one of the best private collections in the world. Some of the inferior stuff she has given away, with great aplomb, to cosmetic buyers who bore it proudly back to inland U. S. cities. But much of it still remains and Madame, being thrifty, cannot bear to throw it out. Besides, she may need a gift for another buyer.

For 15 years New York has been Rubinstein's business headquarters but up to the war she considered Paris her real home. There she slept in a mother-of-pearl bed, dined artists and the impoverished inmates of the *Almanach de Gotha*, and dispatched to the eager U. S. press such weighty pronouncements as, "Sporting pink is on every lip."

Without Paris, Madame is limited in her trips and in her dinner guests. Even in New York, however, she can muster a respectable sprinkling of titles for the guest lists which she sends to the newspapers. One announcement promises: "Mrs. Cornelius Bliss, Mme Marie-Louis Bousquet, Mme M. Lednicka, Countess Janusz Ilinska, Mrs. Carmel Snow, Mr. A. Conger Goodyear, Mr. Thornton Wilder, Baron Kurt von Pantz, Baron de Guinzbourg, Duke di Verdura, Monsieur de Brunhoff."

Madame's guests are entertained in what is perhaps the most arrestingly decorated apartment in New York. The drawing room is French Modern, "with a Victorian influence," hung with excellent Picassos and Renoirs, with a purple satin sofa to match Madame's purple satin skirt. Guests dine in a gold-and-white baroque dining room where, if they happen to be the directors of the African show at the Museum of Modern Art, they eat by the light of candles flickering eerily over the hideous faces of Madame's fine collection of primitive African masks. After dinner guests sip coffee in the "dream room," done in a wavy style reminiscent of an underseascape by Dali. Good bridge players are sometimes thrown off their game by being seated before a statue of an overfed African cannibal with a fringe of human hair still protruding from his lips.

Madame is an extremely generous friend. When she takes a liking to

people she pats them, squeezes them and plies them with "leedle geefts." For this purpose she keeps on hand a stock of perfumes which she personally selected and of which she thinks no less highly for the fact that they did not sell well in the salon. She lends her collections frequently for charity exhibitions and one summer turned over her Greenwich home to a slight acquaintance who needed a summer place for two children.

This generosity is balanced by an iron determination to eliminate all waste or needless expense. She does her own marketing in Greenwich, waiting until late Saturday afternoon, when she can haggle the storekeepers into cutting their prices. She still wears blouses bearing the initials of her first marriage: HRT—Helena Rubinstein Titus. She is a light-turner-offer and a plate-licker-cleaner. At dinner, if she spies a guest leaving a lamp chop on his plate, she will, after politely ascertaining that the guest does not want it, reach over and spear it for herself. Some of Madame's fastidious guests call her a peasant for this but it is the sound, natural instinct of a woman who saw enough poverty in her youth to give her a horror of waste.

In 1937 Madame divorced her first husband, Edward J. Titus, after 28 years of married life. Titus is an American who carried on a dilettante book-publishing business in Paris and who, after the divorce, married a young Swiss girl. Madame herself in 1938 married Prince Artchil Gourielli-Tchkonia, a Georgian nobleman some years her junior. The Prince is a charming, easy-going man, recently become an American citizen, who regards his strong-willed wife with a combination of amazed admiration and amused affection. One of the first things he did after their marriage in Paris was to go around Madame's famous mother-of-pearl bed with a chisel and chip off bits. It looked too perfect, he said.

Madame's relatives, who are numerous, play a large part in Helena Rubinstein, Inc. Four of her sisters are working for her: Manka as traveling lecturer, Ceska as manager of the English business, Stella preparing to open the new Buenos Aires salon and Pauline carrying on what is left of the French wholesale business. Her niece Mala, daughter of a sister still in Poland, directs the New York salon.

Madame's two sons by her first husband, Roy and Horace Titus, are also connected with the business. Roy, a pleasant, genial young man who left Princeton and later got his degree from Oxford, co-ordinates the sales end of the business with production at the factory in Long Island City, where the Rubinstein products are made. He runs his part of the business efficiently but unlike his mother, who works until all hours, he makes a point of catching the 5 o'clock train for his Westchester home. His brother Horace, who left both Yale and Oxford, handles Rubinstein's advertising in an agency which he started this year. As retiring as his brother is gregarious, Horace would like to be a painter and writer, but he stays in business to help his mother.

At present Madame is planning to launch a new venture with her husband, the Prince, just around the corner from the Rubinstein salon. This will tentatively be known as the Gourielli Apothecary. Here Madame plans to introduce, under the name of Gourielli, two new lines of expensive lotions, creams

and perfumes, one for women and one for men. Ever on the lookout for new sales openings, she has lately been turning over in her mind the idea that perhaps the beauty business has exploited only half its potential market. "Men could be a lot more beautiful," she sagely observes.

If Madame's idea succeeds, U. S. males may soon be subjected to the same devastating sales and promotion technique by which the beauty business annually extracts an average of \$12 from every woman in the country. This technique is summed up by a piece of advice which Madame likes to give her salesgirls: "You have got to look right down into their pocketbooks and *get that last nickel.*"

HAMILTON BASSO *In the opening phase of his career Hamilton Basso, a product of New Orleans and Tulane University, studied law, did reporting, editing, and other forms of news work, and never stayed long in one place if he could possibly travel to another. More recently he has concentrated on writing; his record shows publication of a full-length life of Beauregard, work on The New Republic, several novels (Days Before Lent, 1940, won the Southern Authors' Award), and contributions to such magazines as The New Yorker. Now in his early forties, Basso shows in the following profile of Somerset Maugham that he has mastered the brilliant, difficult technique required to produce the modern short biography.*

WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM

WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM, whose headquarters have been in New York for the past four years, finds, at the age of seventy, that he has fame, fortune, and a very long memory. Few living writers have a larger reputation than Maugham, whose books have been translated into every language into which English is conveniently translatable, and no living writer of a comparable position in the world of letters, with the exception of George Bernard Shaw, has earned as much money—more than three million dollars. Since money still talks, and since several million dollars all talking at once compel a considerable amount of attention, nobody is prepared to deny that Maugham is one of the most conspicuously successful authors of his time. Opinion about his merit as an artist, however, is not nearly so unanimous. Whereas he is looked upon in certain quarters as the dean of English novelists, there are those who consider his eminence merely another demonstration of the wisdom of living to a ripe old age. He has become the dean of English novelists, they say, for precisely the same reason Senator Tom

"William Somerset Maugham," from *The New Yorker*, January 6, 1945. Permission of *The New Yorker*. Copyright 1945, The F-R. Publishing Corporation.

Connally of Texas has become chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee—seniority. Maugham, who is generally classified as a cynic and thinks cynicism should begin to corrode at home, tends to agree with this judgment. "Why writers should be more esteemed the older they grow has long perplexed me," he wrote in his novel "Cakes and Ale," a not overly sympathetic story of two literary Englishmen. "After mature consideration I have come to the conclusion that the real reason for the universal applause that comforts the declining years of the author who exceeds the common span of man is that intelligent people after the age of thirty read nothing at all. As they grow older the books they read in their youth are lit with its glamour and with every year that passes they ascribe greater merit to the author that wrote them. . . . Longevity is genius."

Maugham is not indifferent to the greatness that has been thrust upon him by longevity, or to the quiet pleasures that derive from having money in the bank, but he has had enough of both not to be impressed by them. He is much more interested in the simple fact that he is now seventy years old. "As one enters upon each succeeding decade," he says, "I suppose it is only natural to look upon it as a fairly significant event. I have been regularly reading myself a lecture every ten years since I was thirty. 'You are a boy no longer,' I told myself on that occasion. 'You are a man and must behave like a man.' When I was forty, I said, 'There it goes; that is the end of youth.' When I was fifty, I said, 'It's no use pretending any longer; this is middle age and there is no way of getting around it.' At sixty I knew that I had reached the threshold of old age and that the time had come for me to start putting my affairs in order. But of all anniversaries, I think the seventieth is the most momentous. One has reached the three score and ten which one is accustomed to regard as the allotted span of man and one is no longer merely on the threshold of old age. At seventy one is just a very old party—just another old man."

When Maugham was born, on January 25, 1874, in Paris, where his father, a lawyer, was solicitor to the British Embassy, all the great figures of Victorian England except Dickens and Thackeray were still alive. The Queen had been on the throne for nearly thirty-seven years and was to continue to serve as the chief influence on English society for twenty-seven more. Disraeli and Gladstone were rulers of the political roost, Carlyle and Ruskin were draped in their luxuriant reputations, Browning and Tennyson were at the height of their fame. These names and others like them sprinkled the conversations in the Maugham apartment on the Avenue d'Antin, one of the streets that radiate from the Rond Point and, as with practically all English families abroad, the true center of the world was still in London. However, until he was ten, when the death of his father left him an orphan—his mother had died of tuberculosis two years before—Maugham knew more about the City of Light than he knew about the Cradle of Empire. This French childhood, naturally enough, greatly affected the rest of his life. He still thinks of France, where he has a villa on the Riviera, as his real home. "I find it impossible to feel entirely myself until I have at least put the Channel between England and me,"

he says. He knew French before he knew English, and when he went to England after the death of his father to live with a clergyman uncle, the vicar of Whitstable, he became something of a butt at school because of his frequent mispronunciation of English words. He still remembers the roar of laughter that greeted him when he read aloud the phrase "unstable as water" as though "unstable" rhymed with "Dunstable." He had a pronounced stammer, which persists to this day, though in a far less severe form, and that didn't make life any happier for him at school. Nor did his uncle go out of his way to make it pleasant at home.

The vicar, Henry MacDonald Maugham, M.A., had held his post in Whitstable for fourteen years when his nephew came to live with him. He had a German wife, an irritable disposition, a comfortable regimen that he didn't want upset, and a fondness for moralizing at considerable length. He also liked to make such observations as "Only ask those people to dine with you who can ask you to dine in return" and "It is not good for all people to drink spirits; it is a sin, in fact, to put temptation in their way." Every novelist draws upon his experience and recollections for his material, and few authors have written more autobiographically than Maugham. His most famous novel, "Of Human Bondage," is largely the story of the author from childhood to middle age, and in it, as well as in "Cakes and Ale," he has drawn a portrait of his uncle and recorded his boyhood in Whitstable. In "Of Human Bondage," in which the uncle is "Mr. Carey," Maugham wrote:

He was a man of somewhat less than average height, inclined to corpulence, with his hair, worn long, arranged over the scalp to conceal his baldness. He was clean-shaven. His features were regular, and it was possible to imagine that in his youth he had been good-looking. On his watch chain he wore a gold cross. . . .

One day was very like another at the vicarage. Soon after breakfast Mary Ann brought in the *Times*. Mr. Carey shared it with two neighbors. He had it from ten till one, when the gardener took it over to Mr. Ellis . . . with whom it remained till seven; then it was taken to Miss Brooks . . . who, since she got it late, had the advantage of keeping it. In summer Mrs. Carey, when she was making jam, often asked her for a copy to cover the pots with. . . .

Dinner was at one o'clock; and on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday it consisted of beef, roast, hashed, and minced, and on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, of mutton. On Sunday they ate one of their own chickens. . . .

On the second Sunday after Philip arrived an unlucky incident occurred. Mr. Carey had retired as usual after dinner for a little snooze in the drawing room, but he was in an irritable mood and could not sleep. . . . Suddenly he heard an unexpected noise. He pulled the handkerchief off his face, got up from the sofa on which he was lying, and went into the dining room. Philip was seated . . . with all his blocks around him. He had built a monstrous castle, and some defect in the foundation had just brought the structure down in noisy ruin. "What are you doing with those blocks, Philip? You know you're not allowed to play games on Sunday." "I always used to play at home," he answered. "I'm sure your dear mama never allowed you to do such a wicked thing as that. . . . Don't you know it's very, very wicked to play on Sunday. . . . You're going to church tonight, and how can you face your Maker when you've been breaking one of His laws

in the afternoon. . . . You're a very naughty boy. . . . Think of the grief you're causing your poor mother in heaven."

It was not long before young Maugham began to revolt against his uncle and his uncle's way of life. He has been revolting against it ever since. Maugham's hedonistic approach to life, which has caused him to look upon Epicurus as a greater teacher than St. Paul and has led him to make something of a career of catering to his senses, is but one manifestation of that rebellion. A prime tenet of Victorian Christianity as preached in the Whitstable vicarage was that pleasure was harmful and pain ennobling. Maugham's disagreement with this bit of dogma has been prolonged and insistent. "I wonder how long it will be before the idea will be driven out of men's heads that pleasure is hurtful and pain beneficial," he once said to an old friend. "No more stupid apology for pain has ever been manufactured than that it elevates. Pain is nothing more than the signal given by the nerves that the organism is in circumstances hurtful to it; it would be as reasonable to assert that a danger signal elevates a train. People continually ruin their lives by persisting in actions against which their sensations rebel. It occurs to few people that a man who sits out in the rain for a noble object is just as likely to get rheumatism as the drunkard who lies out in a ditch because he is too drunk to get home."

Maugham finds that his thoughts turn increasingly to the past, but he never talks about his childhood if he can help it. Some weeks ago he was forced to speak of it, though only indirectly, when he was asked to read the first chapter of "Of Human Bondage" for a recording of the book for the blind. (The rest of the book was to be read by a professional reader.) Some of the situations and characters in "Of Human Bondage" had to be altered, of course, to suit the requirements of fiction, but everything in it is part of Maugham's experience. The first chapter, moreover, is, according to him, entirely autobiographical. "I did not myself realize how true this was until I was asked to make this reading," Maugham said afterward. "I find it practically impossible to read anything I have written once it is published and I had not looked at 'Of Human Bondage' since I corrected the proof sheets. That, I needn't say, was a good many years ago; twenty-nine, to be exact. I went to the studio where the record was being made and, when the time came, started to read. I hadn't read more than ten or twelve lines when I found that I couldn't go on. I choked up and then, to my utter humiliation, I broke down and cried."

For over a hundred years the male members of the Maugham family have been lawyers. Maugham's paternal grandfather, Robert Armand Maugham, helped found the Incorporated Law Society, wrote many books on legal subjects, and owned and edited for twenty-five years a journal called the *Legal Observer*. Maugham had five brothers. Two died in infancy; the three others became lawyers. His only living brother, four years older than he is, became Lord High Chancellor of England during the Prime Ministership of Neville Chamberlain. He was elevated to the peerage in 1935, when he became a

baron, and he is now the Viscount of Hartfield. Maugham, even though he has occasionally struck out at the British upper classes like an aroused bush-master, is still English enough to love a lord, particularly when the lord happens to be his own brother. A few years ago Maugham was at the opening of Parliament, sitting in the visitors' gallery with an American friend. At the point in the pageantry when the Lord High Chancellor appeared, dressed in his robes of office, Maugham jumped up, tugged at the elbow of his friend, and cried, "Look! It's my brother! Get up! Get up!" Maugham at that time was a close friend of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, who often visited him at his villa on the Riviera. His older brother did not quite approve of the association. The two men had many muffled, well-bred controversies over the merits of George VI and Edward VIII. "In any case," the Viscount once said to Maugham, "my King speaks the King's English better than your King. *Yours* drops his 'h's.'"

Maugham might also have become a lawyer had it not been for his stammer. The vicar, whose favorite oath was "Bismarck," correctly felt that his nephew would make a Bismarcked sorry lawyer and decided, apparently on the theory that unimpeded declamation is more important at the bar than in the pulpit, that he should become a minister. It was his opinion, also, that any minister who didn't have a gentleman's education was a poor minister, so Maugham, at the age of thirteen, was sent to King's School in Canterbury to be instructed in the classics and the catechism of good form. When Maugham entered King's in 1887, the institution of fagging was at its worst. His life there, as he tells in "Of Human Bondage," was perhaps even less pleasant than it had been at the vicarage. His stammer, symbolized in the novel by the clubfoot of the central character, Philip Carey, made things worse. "The whole school rushed noisily into the playground," Maugham wrote. "The new boys were told to go into the middle, while the others stationed themselves along opposite walls. . . . The old boys ran from wall to wall while the new boys tried to catch them. . . . Philip saw a boy running past and tried to catch him, but his limp gave him no chance. . . . Then one of them had the brilliant idea of imitating Philip's clumsy run. Other boys saw it and began to laugh; then they all copied the first; and they ran around Philip, limping grotesquely, screaming in their treble voices with shrill laughter. . . . The game was forgotten in the entertainment of Philip's deformity."

Maugham's education as a gentleman at King's School was interrupted, after three years, by a lung infection. His aunt and uncle, remembering that his mother and her only sister had died of tuberculosis, sent him to Hyères, in the south of France. He stayed in Hyères for nine months, living with a tutor, and then, his health improved, returned to King's School. By this time he had made up his mind that he wasn't going to be a minister, and he managed to get the vicar's permission to go to Germany for a year to study. The money for his education had been left him by his father, and the vicar, who had never particularly liked having him around, was willing enough to let him do as he chose. Maugham was, after all, seventeen years old and could no longer be treated as a child. He went to Heidelberg, where he lived with

a family known to his German aunt, but he did not enter the university. However, he attended some of the lectures given there, made friends with a few of the students, argued with them about Schopenhauer and Shakespeare, and tried to learn to like German cooking and beer. He was more successful in learning German. When he returned to England at the end of the year, he could speak it fluently. His aunt was pleased by this new accomplishment, but his uncle, whose disposition wasn't mellowing with age, did not see that it especially fitted him to make a living. It was high time, the vicar said, for him to stop this Bismarcked trifling and, Bismarck it all, start earning his keep. It was eventually decided, after many family discussions and out of what appears to have been little more than desperation, that he should study medicine. He was no more interested in being a doctor than he had been in becoming a minister and he accepted the suggestion only because it gave him an excuse to get to London. In the autumn of 1892, a few months before his nineteenth birthday, he entered the medical school attached to St. Thomas's Hospital. St. Thomas's, founded in the thirteenth century, is housed in a group of buildings that run along the Thames, directly across the river from the Houses of Parliament. The medical school occupies one of the buildings and much of the work of its students is done at the hospital, which draws most of its patients from the Borough of Lambeth, in which it is situated, and the four boroughs—Battersea, Southwark, Camberwell, and Wandsworth—that adjoin Lambeth. These boroughs, before the blitz took care of a large part of them, were one of the worst slum areas in London.

While Maugham was a medical student, he lived in a boarding house at 11 Vincent Square. The establishment was run by a cockney named Mrs. Foreman, a small, active, bustling woman with talents for cooking and taking the English language apart. Maugham, who drew a portrait of her in "Cakes and Ale," remembers her very well. One night she went to a music-hall concert and saw one of her neighbors there. "He was dressed to death and to kill the fashion," she told her young boarder. "I tell yer, he did look a caution. He had a great big white flower in his buttonhole, and wot with his ole white flower, and his ole red face, he did look a type and no mistake." Maugham lived in two rooms on the ground floor. He paid Mrs. Foreman a pound a week for them. The mauve decade was at its mauvest and Maugham, who liked having lodgings of his own, furnished them in the art-for-art's-sake, pre-Raphaelite, *Yellow Book* mood of the period. He covered one wall with a Moorish rug, draped the windows with curtains of a color that he now remembers as bilious green, and hung reproductions of paintings by Perugino, Van Dyck, and Hobbema. His interest in the medical profession was not heightened by his proximity to it. He made up his mind that he wanted to be a writer and studied just enough to scrape through his examinations. All his spare time, and much that he simply decided to make spare, he spent reading and writing. He bought a notebook and started filling it with the plots for stories and plays, scraps of dialogue, and random reflections. He went to the theatres and music halls, explored the streets of London, and put himself through a course of reading that ranged from Stendhal and the Russian nov-

elists to Oscar Wilde and Ernest Dowson. He was much impressed by the coruscated prose of the eighteen-nineties, and in the belief that his own flat style could stand some ornamentation, he prowled about the British Museum, where he jotted down notes about the richness of agate, the opulent colors of Limoges enamels, and the haunting mystery of jade. Years later, he went to call on Mrs. Foreman at 11 Vincent Square. She brewed him a cup of tea and they talked about old times. "Very artistic you was, wasn't you?" she said.

Maugham made few friends at medical school and did not become interested until he began to work in the wards of the hospital. For a time he was in the accident ward, giving first aid to urgent cases; later he helped deliver babies in the slums of Lambeth. Out of this experience came the material for his first novel, "Liza of Lambeth." It was written while he was still a medical student and it tells the story of a girl of the slums. It was published in 1897, when Maugham was twenty-three. One of the critics who praised it was Edmund Gosse; it made a tremendous impression on him and served as a subject for a joke that Gosse never got enough of. Maugham used to run into Gosse once or twice a year after "Liza of Lambeth" appeared and continued to do so until Gosse's death, thirty years afterward. Even after Maugham had become a popular dramatist and had written "Of Human Bondage" and "The Moon and Sixpence," he never encountered Gosse without the critic's saying, "Oh, my dear Maugham, I liked your 'Liza of Lambeth' so much. How *wise* you are never to have written anything else."

"Liza of Lambeth" had a very modest sale, earning only a hundred dollars in royalties the first year, but Maugham felt sufficiently heartened by the way it was received to decide to devote his life to literature. He stayed at St. Thomas's long enough to become a physician, and he is still a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons and a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, but he never practiced. He regards the years he spent at St. Thomas's as extremely valuable and wishes he had waited longer before becoming a writer. "The chances of one's writing anything of permanent value before one is thirty are small," he once told a young author who had asked his advice. "One wastes valuable themes trying to make a living. It is better to adopt any occupation which will give you a living and some experience, and write on the side. So far as I personally am concerned, I wish that I had practiced medicine for three or four years instead of writing books which have long been as dead as mutton."

The seven novels Maugham wrote in the eighteen-year interval between 1897, when "Liza of Lambeth" was published, and 1915, when "Of Human Bondage" appeared, are just as dead as he says they are. Even their titles have been forgotten: "The Making of a Saint," "The Explorer," "The Magician," "The Bishop's Apron," "The Hero," "Mrs. Craddock," and "The Merry-Go-Round." Maugham produced these novels in the hope of making a reputation for himself, and, since he had used up the inheritance left by his father and was now trying to support himself by writing, he also hoped to make some money. His ambition, however, was to write for the stage. He wrote his first play, "A Man of Honour," in 1898, but no producer would touch it. It wasn't

put on until 1903, when it was given two performances by the Stage Society, a London organization not unlike the Provincetown Players. "I, too," Maugham says, "have been a highbrow."

Shortly after the two-night run of "A Man of Honour," Maugham, then thirty, went to live in Paris. He was still trying to make his living as a novelist and was very poor. He took a small fifth-floor flat near the Lion de Belfort, from which he had a fine view of the Montparnasse cemetery, and he dined every evening at a restaurant called the Chat Blanc, in the Rue d'Odessa. A number of writers ate there, along with some painters and sculptors, and they had a little room to themselves. A good dinner, including wine, was only two francs fifty. Arnold Bennett was living in Paris and he, too, dined at the Chat Blanc. He and Maugham struck up a friendship that lasted until Bennett's death, in 1931. The fact that they both stammered was a strong tie between them. Maugham is acutely conscious of his stammer, but he rarely mentions it. Just as, in "Of Human Bondage," he gave Philip Carey a clubfoot, so, in speaking of himself, he will invent other handicaps to symbolize the defect in his speech. "If only my parents had had my teeth straightened," he will say, although his teeth plainly do not need straightening, "my whole life would have been different." The closest he has ever come to discussing his stammer was in his preface for one edition of Bennett's "The Old Wives' Tale." "Everyone knows," Maugham wrote, "that Arnold was afflicted with a very bad stammer; it was painful to watch the struggle he had sometimes. . . . It was torture to him. Few realized the exhaustion it caused him to speak. What to most men was as easy as breathing, to him was a constant strain. It tore his nerves to pieces. Few knew the humiliation it exposed him to, the ridicule it excited in many, the impatience it aroused, the awkwardness of feeling that it made people find him tiresome. . . . Few knew the distressing sense it gave rise to of a bar to complete contact with other men. It may be that except for the stammer which forced him to introspection, Arnold would never have become a writer."

Maugham returned to London from Paris in 1905, still poor and still obscure. The royalties from his novels were small and he had to take to book reviewing to eke out his income. He also tried his hand at theatrical criticism, but the editor to whom he submitted his first piece of copy told him he had better stick to novel-writing. Max Beerbohm, who had liked "Liza of Lambeth" and had not liked "A Man of Honour," gave him the same advice. Despite these suggestions, Maugham continued to write plays. By 1907 he had written three comedies, "Lady Frederick," "Mrs. Dot," and "Jack Straw." All three, like "A Man of Honour," were at first turned down by the London producers. Then, in the autumn of 1907, the manager of the Court Theatre decided, with many misgivings, to put on "Lady Frederick," with Ethel Irving, one of England's most popular actresses, in the leading rôle. The play was an immediate hit. The next summer, four of his plays were running simultaneously in London—"Lady Frederick," "Jack Straw," "Mrs. Dot," and "The Explorer." The last, a reworking of his novel of the same name, had only a

moderate success, but the three others played to packed houses for a year. Maugham's reputation crossed the Atlantic and by 1911 these three plays had been produced in New York, starring such people as John Drew, Ethel Barrymore, Billie Burke, and Marie Tempest. Billie Burke aroused Maugham's special admiration and gratitude. In 1911, flush with fame and cash, he bought a handsome Georgian house at 6 Chesterfield Street, in Mayfair. The drawing room at 6 Chesterfield was dominated by the portrait of a woman. "There," Maugham used to say, somewhat in the manner of Browning's nobleman admiring his last duchess, "is the charming lady who paid for this house." The portrait was of Billie Burke, who had contributed a good deal to the very profitable success of "Mrs. Dot" in New York.

Maugham wrote plays until 1933. His last one was "Sheppey," which was produced in London that year but was not seen in New York until last season. His comedy "The Circle," which was performed in New York in 1921, with John Drew and Mrs. Leslie Carter in the leading rôles, is generally considered the most expertly made play of the modern theatre. Maugham thinks that he has a better chance of being remembered for his plays than for his novels. He is now mostly thought of, however, as a novelist and his present reputation as a dramatist is based largely on a play of which he did not write a single line, "Rain," the stage version of his short story "Miss Thompson."

This drama, whose leading rôle was first and most spectacularly played by Jeanne Eagels, in 1922, has since been performed by a long line of highly inflammatory actresses that includes Lenore Ulric, Tallulah Bankhead, Joan Crawford, Sally Rand, and, in the current musical version called "Sadie Thompson," June Havoc. It owes its existence to Maugham's fondness for travel, to an epidemic of chicken pox, and to the sleeplessness of a young playwright named John Colton. In 1914, when the first World War broke out, Maugham was finishing "Of Human Bondage." He had started it in 1898, shortly after the publication of "Liza of Lambeth," and, for one reason or another, had put it aside. In 1912, beginning to weary of the theatre, he started work on it again. It is a good example of literature as catharsis. "I wrote that book," Maugham has said, "to free myself of an intolerable obsession, to rid myself of ghosts. From that point of view it was successful. After I corrected the proofs, I found that all the ghosts were laid. They never troubled me, or crossed my mind, again."

Maugham corrected the proofs of "Of Human Bondage" in the midst of battle in France. At the outbreak of the war he joined a Red Cross ambulance unit as a medical officer and remained in France until 1915; then, in 1916, after a short stay in Italy, where he wrote "Our Betters," he became a member of British Intelligence and was sent to Switzerland. He lived in Geneva, whose wartime atmosphere was not unlike that of an Eric Ambler novel. A whole League of Nations of spies had moved in on Geneva—German, Austrian, Italian, Russian, French, British, Turkish, and Balkan—and each hotel had its quota. Maugham pretended he was merely a writer, and he did write one play, "Caroline," in Geneva, but this did not keep the Swiss police from searching his room every few days. Maugham later wrote a book of fiction, "Ashenden,"

based on his adventures as a secret agent, but, looking back upon his experience as a spy, he remembers it as rather a bore. "My work in Switzerland," he says, "began by appealing to my sense of romance as well as my sense of the ridiculous. It became, unfortunately, more ridiculous than romantic day by day."

In 1917, Maugham left Switzerland to come to the United States, ostensibly to supervise the production of "Caroline." It would appear, however, that the real reason for his trip was to make preparations for his second mission as a secret agent, which took him, some months later, to Russia during the Revolution. On his way to Russia, via Japan, he was granted time out to make a junket in the South Seas on his own. He was threatened by tuberculosis (it almost finished him off when he finally got to Russia and put him in a sanatorium in Scotland for two years) and was told by his doctors to get some rest and sunshine before he took on a Moscow winter. He had also made up his mind to write a novel based on the life of Paul Gauguin ("The Moon and Sixpence"), and his illness gave him a chance to gather material for it. In the South Seas, the steamer on which he was travelling put in at Pago Pago, on the island of Tutuila. It was supposed to stop there only twenty-four hours, but, on the morning it was scheduled to sail, an epidemic of chicken pox broke out. Chicken pox is a much more serious disease in the South Seas than it is elsewhere. Pago Pago was put under quarantine. Pago Pago had only one inn, and Maugham and some of his fellow-voyagers who had spent the night there were not permitted to go back to the ship. "That," he says, "is how I came to find myself under the same roof as the young woman I called Miss Thompson, along with the missionary and his wife. They were all shipmates of mine."

The story of "Rain" was not acted out before Maugham's eyes. Nobody felt repentant, nobody got seduced, nobody committed suicide. It just rained. The whole design of the story, however, came to Maugham there and then and he made a rough draft of it. He also wrote down, in his notebook, the following descriptions of the three principal characters:

A YOUNG WOMAN: Plump, pretty in a coarse fashion, perhaps not more than twenty-seven. She wore a white dress and a large white hat, long white boots from which the calves bulged in cotton stockings . . .

THE MISSIONARY: A tall, thin man with long limbs loosely jointed . . . Hollow cheeks and high cheekbones . . . His fine, large, dark eyes were deep in their sockets, he had full, sensual lips, he wore his hair rather long . . . A cadaverous air and a look of suppressed fire . . .

THE MISSIONARY'S WIFE: A little woman dressed in black with dull brown hair elaborately arranged . . . Prominent blue eyes . . . Her long face was like a sheep's and her voice was high and metallic, without inflection; it fell monotonously on the ear. . . .

Maugham did not get around to working these notes into the most famous of his short stories until 1920, when it was published in H. L. Mencken's and George Jean Nathan's *Smart Set*. Maugham's agent submitted it to *Smart Set*, which operated on a shoestring and paid shoestring prices, after it had been rejected by practically every other magazine in New York. In the summer of

1921, once more in the United States, Maugham went to Hollywood, where he stayed at the Hollywood Hotel. Among the other guests were Elinor Glyn, who called Maugham "dear, dear, *dear* Willie," and John Colton, the playwright. Colton, the author of "Drifting," "The Cat That Walked Alone," and "The Shanghai Gesture," had been brought to Hollywood to write for the movies. One night, unable to sleep, he left his room and knocked on Maugham's door, just across the hall, and asked him if he had anything to read. Maugham had that morning received the proof sheets of the collection of his short stories that was to be published as "The Trembling of a Leaf." One of the stories in the collection was "Miss Thompson." Maugham handed the proof sheets to Colton. "If you can't sleep," he said, "try these." The next morning, Colton met Maugham in the dining room and had breakfast with him. Colton looked tired and bleary-eyed. "I didn't sleep a wink," he said. "I read that story of yours, the one you call 'Miss Thompson,' and I stayed awake all night thinking what a good play it would make. I'd like to try my hand at turning it into one." "Go ahead," Maugham said. "It's all yours." Colton suggested that they shake hands on it and they did. Maugham admits that he thought Colton was biting off more than he could chew. The story, in his opinion as a dramatist, couldn't possibly be made into a play. Colton, however, was not the only one who thought that it had possibilities for the stage. When "The Trembling of a Leaf" was published, several months later, a number of dramatists wanted to rework "Miss Thompson" into a play. One of them offered Maugham's agent, then Elisabeth Marbury, seven thousand dollars for the rights to it.

"I was in a sweat when I heard about the offer," Colton remembers. "I had worked like a dog on the play and had finished the first draft of it. I didn't have seven thousand dollars. I didn't even have a contract. There was nothing in the world to keep Maugham from accepting that offer. All I had was his handshake." Maugham was by then in the midst of his world-travel phase. He has both an itching heel and an itching imagination. Travel, he finds, eases both itches and gives him a certain serenity that he finds rather difficult to achieve otherwise. Besides, travel makes good copy. Many of his novels have what is called an "international background" and, in addition, he has written two books about Spain, a book of Chinese sketches, and a book describing a journey through Burma, the Shan States, Indo-China, and Siam. Elisabeth Marbury, who had heard about Maugham's oral agreement with Colton but didn't know all the circumstances, was faced with the problem of choosing between a relatively penniless playwright and seven thousand dollars in cash. She decided to communicate with Maugham. She had a hard time finding him. En route to the Orient, he had momentarily dropped from sight. She finally found him in the South Seas and cabled him there. A few days later she received his answer: "The handshake with Colton still stands."

It was, for both Colton and Maugham, as well as for Clemence Randolph, whom Colton brought in as a collaborator, a profitable handshake. "Rain," with Jeanne Eagels as Miss Thompson, wearing a costume she picked up on Sixth Avenue for six dollars and thirty cents, opened in Philadelphia in

October, 1922. It got off to a very wobbly start. The gross for the first week was only \$6,115 and the play looked like a flop. By the middle of the second week, however, business picked up. Even so, everybody who had anything to do with the play was still worried when it opened at the Maxine Elliott Theatre, in New York, two weeks later. Nobody has worried since. "Rain" sold out for eighteen months and then, after a brief intermission to give the cast a rest, reopened and ran for thirteen more weeks. Two road companies were organized and Miss Eagels, who went on tour in one of them, played Sadie Thompson in thirty cities for thirty-four weeks; the second company gave performances in forty-four cities. The original company played to some two million persons and is said to have grossed three million dollars. The two road companies drew over seven hundred thousand additional customers and added eight to nine hundred thousand dollars to the take. By 1935, sixty Sadies had appeared in stock companies around the country, and in 1935 Tallulah Bankhead brought a revival of "Rain" to Broadway. Sally Rand toured the red-barn circuit with the play in 1938, ranging from Mt. Kisco, New York, to Skowhegan, Maine, and in 1941 Lenore Ulric became Sadie Thompson for the benefit of Flatbush. "Rain" was also produced in London, where it didn't do so well, and both Gloria Swanson and Joan Crawford have appeared in motion-picture versions of it. Bookkeeping, in the world of the theatre, is not one of the exact sciences. Decimals get misplaced and commas sprout as thickly as winter rye. Amateur auditors who have worked their way through the available figures, however, are convinced that the play has grossed over four million dollars and that Maugham and the two authors of "Rain," Colton and Clemence Randolph, have split over a million in royalties.

Maugham, at seventy, is willing to call it a day. Most writers, he thinks, live too long. He can't do anything about having reached seventy, but he finds it hard, having been a writer for so long, to close up shop. He intends to, however, very soon. He isn't altogether sure, when he thinks of it, that he isn't keeping open now just to entertain himself. Maugham is now making notes for a novel about Machiavelli, centering on the statesman's three-month stay with Cesare Borgia, a visit that gave the author of "The Prince" so much of his material for that exegesis of power politics, and he has two other novels in the back of his head. One is a miracle story set in sixteenth-century Spain and the other is about a working-class family in the London slums. "But now," Maugham says, "I am content to keep these unwritten books to myself, to amuse myself with in my idle reveries. That is how an author gets most pleasure from his books. Once they are published, they are his no longer. Nor do I think it likely, at my present age, that I shall write anything of any great value. Incentive fails, invention fails, energy fails. One's seventieth anniversary is quite a milestone, don't you know. It really is. I spent my last birthday all by myself down in South Carolina. I didn't want anybody to know about it because I didn't want any celebration. I just wanted to be

alone and think things over. There is quite a lot to think about when you are seventy. You're really a very old party then, you really are. Seventy years is quite a long time. I can't say I would like to live them all over again—it would be almost as idle as reading a detective story you have read before—and I think I'd refuse the chance. I have had enough. There are times when I feel that I have done everything too often—read too many books, seen too many pictures, known too many people, and listened to too much music. I'd like to pass the few years that are left to me pleasantly and quietly. I hope to go back to France and live in my house there once again, but if it has been blown to bits in the war, as perhaps it has been, I think I may go to Portugal. It's pretty in Portugal, and the people are agreeable, and there is always sun. It's pleasant, isn't it, to sit in the sun?"

CARL SANDBURG *scarcely needs an introduction to a college audience. In the top rank of American poets, he is also well known for his biographical studies of Lincoln, his collections of songs, his tales for children, and the lecture-recitation-song programs which he has given up and down the country for years. Success—worldwide recognition, honorary degrees, membership in the American Academy of Arts and Letters—did not come without a period of struggle and adjustment. Born in Galesburg, Illinois, in 1878, Sandburg is the son of Swedish immigrants. Following a recognizably American pattern as a youth, he did odd jobs, rode freights, took part in the Spanish-American War, attended Lombard College. His experiments in poetry, reminiscent of the pioneer work of Whitman, were encouraged by Harriet Monroe and led to the winning of various prizes. (Students should consult Slabs of the Sunburnt West; The People, Yes, etc.) It was almost inevitable that a man with Sandburg's background should some day do the life (six volumes) of Abraham Lincoln; a Pulitzer Prize-winning work, it reveals in the telling the homespun simplicity and strength of subject and author, both products of the best in the American tradition.*

THE YOUTH OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

IN THE year 1776, when the thirteen American colonies of England gave to the world that famous piece of paper known as the Declaration of Independence, there was a captain of Virginia militia living in Rockingham County, named Abraham Lincoln.

He was a farmer with a 210-acre farm deeded to him by his father, John Lincoln, one of the many English, Scotch, Irish, German, Dutch settlers who were taking the green hills and slopes of the Shenandoah Valley and putting

"The Youth of Abraham Lincoln," from *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years* by Carl Sandburg
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their plows to ground never touched with farming tools by the red men, the Indians, who had held it for thousands of years.

The work of driving out the red men so that the white men could farm in peace was not yet finished. In the summer of that same year of 1776, Captain Abraham Lincoln's company took a hand in marches and fights against the Cherokee tribes.

It was a time of much fighting. To the south and west were the red men. To the north and east were white men, the regiments of British soldiers, and Virginia was sending young men and corn and pork to the colonial soldiers under General George Washington. Amos Lincoln, a kinsman of Abraham, up in Massachusetts, was one of the white men who, the story ran, rigged out as Indians, went on board a British ship and dumped a cargo of tea overboard to show their disobedience, contempt, and defiance of British laws and government; later Amos was a captain of artillery in the colonial army.

There was a Hananiah Lincoln who fought at Brandywine under Washington and became a captain in the Twelfth Pennsylvania regiment; and Hananiah was a first cousin of Abraham. Jacob Lincoln, a brother of Abraham, was at Yorktown, a captain under Washington at the finish of the Revolutionary War. These Lincolns in Virginia came from Berks County in Pennsylvania.

Though they were fighting men, there was a strain of Quaker blood running in them; they came in part from people who wore black clothes only, used the word "thee" instead of "you," kept silence or spoke "as the spirit of the heart moved," and held war to be a curse from hell; they were a serene, peaceable, obstinate people.

Now Abraham Lincoln had taken for a wife a woman named Bathsheba Herring. And she bore him three sons there amid the green hills and slopes of the Shenandoah Valley, and they were named Mordecai, Josiah, and Thomas. And she bore two daughters, named Mary and Nancy.

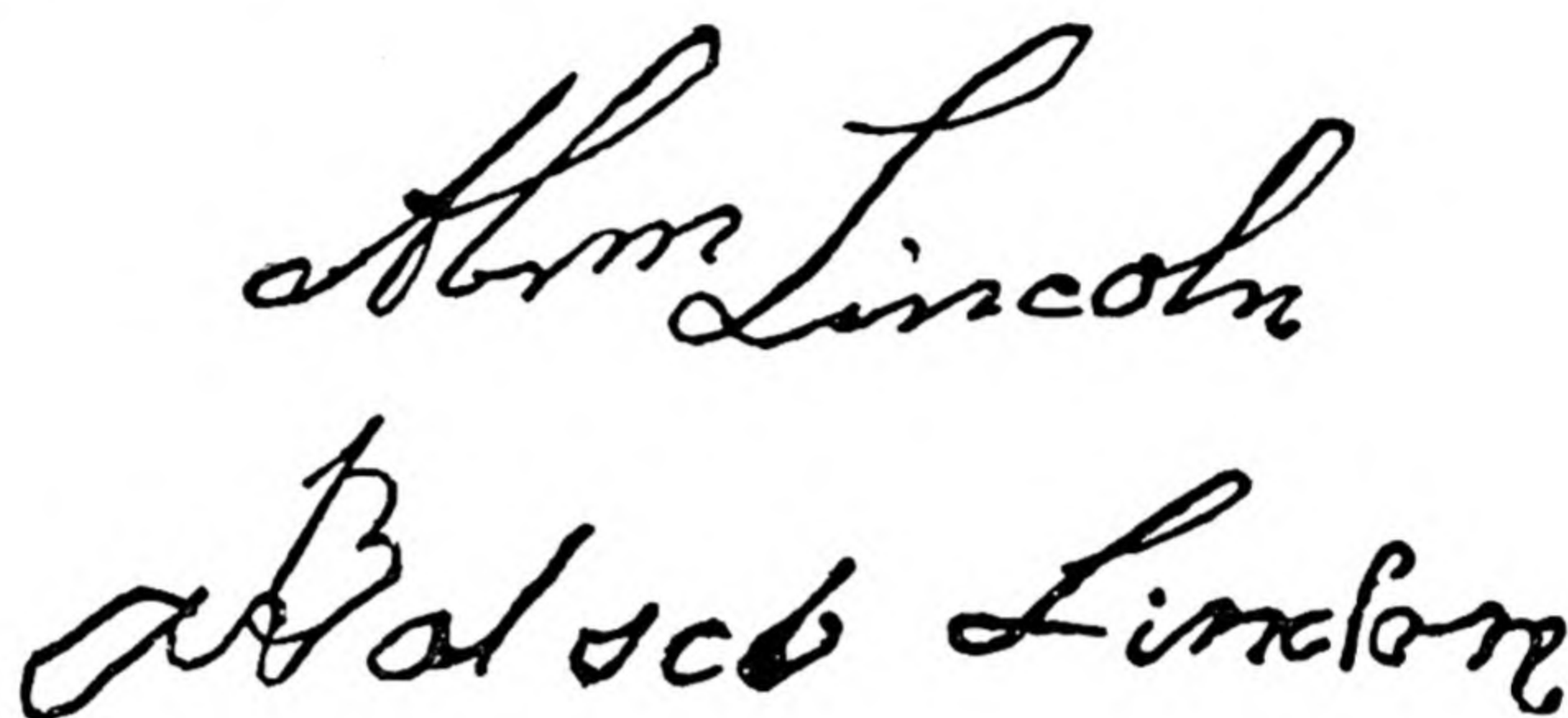
This family of a wife and five children Abraham Lincoln took on horses in the year 1782 and moved to Kentucky. For years his friend, Daniel Boone, had been coming back from trips to Kentucky, sometimes robbed of all his deerskins and bearskins and furs of fox and mink, sometimes alone and without the lusty young bucks who had started with him for Kentucky. And listening to Boone's telling of how the valleys were rich with long slopes of black land and blue grass, how there were game and fish, and tall timber and clear running waters—and seeing the road near his farm so often filled with parties of men and families headed for the wilderness beyond the mountains—he began thinking about taking up land for himself over there. It was his for forty cents an acre. He wanted to be where he could look from his cabin to the horizons on all sides—and the land all his own—was that it? He didn't know. It called to him, that country Boone was talking about.

Boone and his friends had worn a trail following an old buffalo path down the Shenandoah Valley to Lexington and around to Cumberland Gap in Tennessee, then northwest into Kentucky. It had become more than a trail, and was called the Wilderness Road. It was the safest way to Kentucky

because the British and the Indians still had a hold on the Ohio River water route, the only other way to reach Kentucky.

Moving to Kentucky had been in Abraham Lincoln's thoughts for some time, but he didn't finally decide to go until the state of Virginia started a land office and made new laws to help straighten out tangled land-titles in Kentucky.

While Bathsheba was still carrying in her arms the baby, Thomas, it happened that Abraham Lincoln sold his farm, and in accordance with the laws of Virginia she signed papers giving up her rights to her husband's land, declaring in writing on the 24th day of September, 1781, that "she freely and voluntarily relinquished the same without the Force threats or compul-

The image shows two handwritten signatures in cursive. The top signature is 'Abm Lincoln' and the bottom signature is 'Bathsba Lincoln'. Both are written in dark ink on a light background.

Abraham and Bathsheba (or Batsab) Lincoln sign their names to a deed in the courthouse of Rockingham County, Virginia.

sion of her husband." Then they packed their belongings, especially the rifle, the ax, and the plow, and joined a party which headed down the Wilderness Road through Cumberland Gap and up north and west into Kentucky.

Tall mountains loomed about them with long blue shadows at sunup and sundown as they traveled, camped, broke camp, and traveled again. And as they watched the mountains they slanted their keenest eyes on any moving patch of shrub or tree—the red men who ambushed enemies might be there.

There had been papers signed, and the land by law belonged to the white men, but the red men couldn't understand or didn't wish to understand how the land was gone from them to the white men. Besides, the red men had been fighting among themselves for favorite hunting grounds and fishing waters; there had been hundreds of years of fighting; now they were fighting white men by the same weapons, ways, and ambushes as they fought red men. And so, though the scenery was good to look at, the white men traveling the Wilderness Road kept a keen eye on the underbrush and had scouts ahead at the turn of the road and scouts behind.

Some towns and villages then were paying a dollar to two dollars apiece for Indian scalps.

Coming through safe to Kentucky, Abraham Lincoln located on the Green River, where he filed claims for more than 2,000 acres. He had been there three or four years when, one day as he was working in a field, the rifle shot

of an Indian killed him. His children and his children's children scattered across Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, and Illinois.

Tom Lincoln, the child of Abraham and Bathsheba, while growing up, lived in different places in Kentucky, sometimes with his kith and kin, sometimes hiring out to farmers, mostly in Washington County, and somehow betweenwhiles managing to learn the carpenter's trade and cabinet-making. He bought a horse—and paid taxes on it. He put in a year on the farm of his uncle, Isaac Lincoln, on the Wautauga River in East Tennessee. He moved to Hardin County in Kentucky while still a young bachelor, and bought a farm on Mill Creek, paid taxes on the farm, kept out of debt, and once bought a pair of silk suspenders for a dollar and a half at a time when most men were using homemade hickory-bark galluses.

As Tom Lincoln came to his full growth he was about five feet, nine inches tall, weighing about 185 pounds, his muscles and ribs close-knit, so that one time a boy joking with him tried to find the places between his ribs but couldn't put a finger in between any place where a rib ended and the muscle began. His dark hazel eyes looked out from a round face, from under coarse black hair. He was a slow, careless man with quiet manners, would rather have people come and ask him to work on a job than to hunt the job himself. He liked to sit around and have his own thoughts.

He wasn't exactly lazy; he was sort of independent, and liked to be where he wasn't interfered with. A little slab of bacon with hoeecake or a little cornbread and milk every day, and he was satisfied. He drank whisky but not often. The sober Baptists saw more of him than those who were steady at licking up liquor. He was a wild buck at fighting, when men didn't let him alone. A man talked about a woman once in a way Tom Lincoln didn't like. And in the fight that came, Tom bit a piece of the man's nose off. His neighbors knew him as a good man to let alone. And his neighbors knew him for a good workman, a handy man with the ax, the saw, the drawknife, and the hammer. Though he was short-spoken, he knew yarns, could crack jokes, and had a reputation as a story-teller when he got started. He never had much time for the alphabet, could read some, and could sign his name.

Church meetings interested him. He had been to cabins on Sunday mornings; the worshipers sat where it was half dark. Windows hadn't been cut in the walls; light came in through the door; words of the sermon came from a preacher in half-shadows. And he had gone to service in the evening when the cabin was lighted by the burning logs of the fireplace. Sometimes he felt stirred inside when a young woman kneeling on the floor would turn a passionate, longing face to the roof of the cabin and call, "Jesus, I give everything to thee. I give thee all. I give thee all. I am wholly thine!"

He had heard different preachers; some he liked better than others; some he was suspicious of; others he could listen to by the hour. There was a Reverend Jesse Head he had heard preach over at Springfield in Washington County, and he had a particular liking for Jesse Head, who was a good chair-maker, a good cabinet-maker, and an active exhorter in the branch of the Methodist church that stood against Negro slavery and on that account had

separated from the regular church. When Tom joined the Baptists it was in that branch of the church which was taking a stand against slavery.

2

During those years when Tom Lincoln was getting into his twenties, the country in Hardin County and around Elizabethtown was still wilderness, with only a few farms and settlements. Kentucky had been admitted to the Union of states; there were places in the state where civilization had dented the wilderness; but it was still a country of uncut timber, land unknown to the plow, a region where wolves and bear, wild animals and the Indians still claimed their rights and titles, with tooth and fang, claw and club and knife.

They talked in Elizabethtown about Miles Hart, who lived near by, and how he was killed by the Indians after he had used up his powder, how his wife Elizabeth and her two children were taken by the Indians, and how, on an outdoor march with the Indians, she was sent away, as Indian squaws were, by herself, to build a fire in the snow and give birth to her child. The child lived six months, but its mother was several years in the hands of the Indians before a Frenchman bought her near Detroit and sent her back to her relatives in Kentucky, where she again married and was raising a family. It was nearly twenty years since Elder John Gerrard, the Baptist preacher, had come to Hardin County. He preached nine months, and then one day, when a hunting party was surprised by Indians, all got away except Elder Gerrard, who was lame, and whether the Indians killed him, burned him at the stake, or took him along as a slave, nobody ever heard. There were many things to talk about around Elizabethtown. There was a Negro living there called General Braddock, a free man; he had been given his freedom because, when his master's cabin was attacked by Indians, he had killed nine of the red men and saved the lives of his owner's family.

There was the time when Henry Helm and Dan Vertrees were killed by the Indians; a red man wrestled a gun away from a white man and had his war-ax raised to bring down and split the head of the white man; it was then Nicholas Miller, quick as a cat, made a jump, snatched the white man away and killed the Indian. One man who saw it, John Glenn, said, "Miller snatched the white man from the Indian as he would a chicken from a hawk." There was talk about how, even though the wilderness life was full of danger, men kept coming on, the Wilderness Road and the Ohio River bringing more and more settlers year by year, some speaking in one form or another the language of Daniel Boone, calling himself "an instrument ordained by God to settle the wilderness." Also there were those who knew that Dragging Canoe, chief of the Chickamauga tribe of Indians, after a powwow when white men and red signed papers at Wautauga, had pointed his finger northwest toward Kentucky, saying words translated as "Bloody ground! . . . And dark and difficult to settle." It seemed that the ground, the soil, and the lay of the land in Kentucky had an old name among the Indians as a land for war.

As the crossroads grew into settlements in Hardin County, there was hard feeling between the crowd around Elizabethtown and the settlers in the valley over near Hodgen's mill, about where the county seat should be located and the courthouse built. On election days, when the members of the county board were chosen, the voters clashed. The hard feeling lasted nearly ten years. At least fifty combats of fist and skull took place, though it was generally understood that the only time the fighting was not strictly fair and square rough-and-tumble combat was when a young man named Bruce tried to gash his enemies by kicking them with shoes pointed with sharp iron pieces shaped like the "gaffs" which are fastened to the feet of fighting cocks, Bruce himself being a rooster-fight sport.

The first jail in Elizabethtown cost the county \$42.60. The sheriff was discouraged with it, and in 1797 a new jail was built, costing \$700.00, with stocks and whipping-post. Many of the prisoners were in for debt and both white and black men were lashed on their naked backs at the public whipping-post. The stocks were built so that each prisoner had to kneel with his hands and head clamped between two grooved planks. If the prisoner was dead drunk he was laid on his back with his feet in the stocks and kept there till he was sober.

The same year the jail was built, it happened that a man in for debt set fire to it when the jailer was away; the prisoner was nearly roasted to death but was saved, though the jail burned down; after which he was indicted for arson, and acquitted because he was a first-rate bricklayer and the town needed his work.

The time of the grand "raisin'" of the courthouse in 1795 in the middle of August was remembered; on that day forty strong men raised the frames and big logs into place while many women and children looked on, and at noon the men all crowded into the Haycraft double log-house to eat hearty from loaves of bread baked in a clay oven, roast shotes, chickens, ducks, potatoes, roast beef with cabbage and beans, old-fashioned baked custard and pudding, pies, pickles, and "fixin's."

Grand juries held their sessions in the woods alongside the courthouse. In 1798 their entire report was, "We present Samuel Forrester for profane swearing"; on several occasions they mention Isaac Hynes, the sheriff, for "profane swearing." The sheriff was a distiller and his stillhouse was in one year recommended for use as the county jail.

When people spoke of "the time Jacob was hung," they meant the year 1796 and the Negro slave, Jacob, who was "reproved for sloth" and killed his owner with an ax; a jury fixed the value of the slave at 80 pounds, or \$400; he broke jail, was taken again, and on hanging day the sheriff hired another black man "to tie the noose and drive the cart from under," leaving the murderer hanging in mid-air from the scaffold. A large crowd came in Sunday clothes, with lunch baskets, to see the law take its course.

If in that country they wished to speak of lighter things, they could talk about pancakes; it was a saying that a smart woman, a cook who was clever, could toss a pancake off the skillet up through the top of the chimney

and run outdoors and catch it coming down. Eggs were five cents a dozen. And one year a defendant in a case at law got a new trial on showing that in his case the jury, after retiring and before agreeing on a verdict, "did eat, drink, fiddle, and dance." Such were some of the community human cross-weaves in the neighborhood where Tom Lincoln spent the years just before he married.

3

Tom Lincoln was looking for a woman to travel through life with, for better or worse. He visited at the place of Christopher Bush, a hard-working farmer who came from German parents and had raised a family of sons with muscle. "There was no back-out in them; they never shunned a fight when they considered it necessary; and nobody ever heard one of them cry 'Enough.'"

Also there were two daughters with muscle and with shining faces and steady eyes. Tom Lincoln passed by Hannah and gave his best jokes to Sarah Bush. But it happened that Sarah Bush wanted Daniel Johnson for a husband and he wanted her.

Another young woman Tom's eyes fell on was a brunette sometimes called Nancy Hanks because she was a daughter of Lucy Hanks, and sometimes called Nancy Sparrow because she was an adopted daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Sparrow and lived with the Sparrow family.

Lucy Hanks had welcomed her child Nancy into life in Virginia in 1784 and had traveled the Wilderness Road carrying what was to her a precious bundle through Cumberland Gap and on into Kentucky.

The mother of Nancy was nineteen years old when she made this trip, leaving Nancy's father, who had not married her, back in Virginia. She could croon in the moist evening twilight to the shining face in the sweet bundle, "Hush thee, hush thee, thy father's a gentleman." She could toss the bundle into the air against a far, hazy line of blue mountains, catch it in her two hands as it came down, let it snuggle to her breast and feed, while she asked, "Here we come—where from?"

And after they had both sunken in the depths of forgetful sleep, in the early dark and past midnight, the tug of a mouth at her nipples in the gray dawn matched in its freshness the first warblings of birds and the morning stars leaving the earth to the sun and the dew.

And while Nancy was still learning to walk and talk, her mother Lucy was talked about in and around Harrodsburg, Kentucky, as too free and easy in her behavior, too wild in her ways. A grand jury had taken up the case of Lucy Hanks at one session in Harrodsburg and named her to be investigated for immoral tendencies.

And whether some man on the jury or some officer of the law had a spiteful heart against Lucy or whether it was a roistering, jesting grand jury like the one that before agreeing on a verdict "did eat, drink, fiddle and dance," was not clear.

What was clear in the years that had passed was that Lucy Hanks was

strong and strange, loved love and loved babies, had married a man she wanted, Henry Sparrow, and nine children had come and they were all learning to read and write under her teaching. Since she had married the talk about her running wild had let down.

After she married Henry Sparrow her daughter Nancy went under the roof of Thomas Sparrow, a brother of Henry, and Elizabeth Hanks Sparrow, a sister of Lucy. Under the same roof was an adopted boy named Dennis Hanks, a son of a Nancy Hanks who was one of three sisters of Lucy. There were still other Nancy Hankses in Hardin County and those who spoke of any Nancy Hanks often had to mention which one they meant.

Tom Lincoln had seen this particular Nancy Hanks living with the Sparrows and noticed she was shrewd and dark and lonesome. He had heard her tremulous voice and seen her shaken with sacred desires in church camp-meetings; he had seen her at preachings in cabins when her face stood out as a sort of picture in black against the firelights of the burning logs. He knew she could read the Bible, and had read in other books. She had seen a few newspapers and picked out pieces of news and read her way through.

Her dark skin, dark brown hair, keen little gray eyes, outstanding forehead, somewhat accented chin and cheek-bones, body of slender build, weighing about 130 pounds—these formed the outward shape of a woman carrying something strange and cherished along her ways of life. She was sad with sorrows like dark stars in blue mist. The hope was burned deep in her that beyond the harsh clay paths, the everyday scrubbing, washing, patching, fixing, the babble and the gabble of today, there are pastures and purple valleys of song.

She had seen tall hills there in Kentucky. She had seen the stark backbone of Muldraugh's Hill become folded in thin evening blankets with a lavender mist sprayed by sunset lights, and for her there were the tongues of promises over it all.

She believed in God, in the Bible, in mankind, in the past and future, in babies, people, animals, flowers, fishes, in foundations and roofs, in time and the eternities outside of time; she was a believer, keeping in silence behind her gray eyes more beliefs than she spoke. She knew . . . so much of what she believed was yonder—always yonder. Every day came scrubbing, washing, patching, fixing. There was so little time to think or sing about the glory she believed in. It was always yonder. . . .

The day came when Thomas Lincoln signed a bond with his friend, Richard Berry, in the courthouse at Springfield in Washington County, over near where his brother, Mordecai, was farming, and the bond gave notice: "There is a marriage shortly intended between Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks." It was June 10, 1806. Two days later, at Richard Berry's place, Beechland, a man twenty-eight years old and a woman twenty-three years old came before the Reverend Jesse Head, who later gave the county clerk the names of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks as having been "joined together in the Holy Estate of Matrimony agreeable to the rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

After the wedding came "the infare," the Kentucky-style wedding celebration. One who was there said, "We had bear-meat, venison, wild turkey and ducks, eggs wild and tame, maple sugar lumps tied on a string to bite off for coffee or whisky, syrup in big gourds, peach-and-honey; a sheep that two families barbecued whole over coals of wood burned in a pit, and covered with green boughs to keep the juices in; and a race for the whisky bottle."

The new husband put his June bride on his horse and they rode away on the red clay road along the timber trails to Elizabethtown. Their new home was in a cabin close to the courthouse. Tom worked at the carpenter's trade, made cabinets, door-frames, window sash, and coffins. A daughter was born and they named her Sarah. Tom's reputation as a solid, reliable man, whose word could be depended on, was improved after his quarrels with Denton Geoheagan.

He took a contract to cut timbers and help put up a new sawmill for Geoheagan; and when Geoheagan wouldn't pay he went to law and won the suit for his pay. Geoheagan then started two suits against Lincoln, claiming the sawmill timbers were not cut square and true. Lincoln beat him in both suits, and noticed that afterward people looked to him as a reliable man whose word could be depended on.

It was about this time the building of the third Hardin County jail was finished in Elizabethtown, with an old-time dungeon underground. The first jailer was Reverend Benjamin Ogden, who was a Methodist preacher, also a chair-maker and worker in wood.

In May and the blossom-time of the year 1808, Tom and Nancy with little Sarah moved out from Elizabethtown to the farm of George Brownfield, where Tom did carpenter work and helped farm.

The Lincolns had a cabin of their own to live in. It stood among wild crab-apple trees.

And the smell of wild crab-apple blossoms, and the low crying of all wild things, came keen that summer to the nostrils of Nancy Hanks.

The summer stars that year shook out pain and warning, strange laughter, for Nancy Hanks.

4

The same year saw the Lincolns moved to a place on the Big South Fork of Nolin's Creek, about two and a half miles from Hodgenville. They were trying to farm a little piece of ground and make a home. The house they lived in was a cabin of logs cut from the timber near by.

The floor was packed-down dirt. One door, swung on leather hinges, let them in and out. One small window gave a lookout on the weather, the rain or snow, sun and trees, and the play of the rolling prairie and low hills. A stick-clay chimney carried the fire smoke up and away.

One morning in February of this year, 1809, Tom Lincoln came out of his

cabin to the road, stopped a neighbor and asked him to tell "the granny woman," Aunt Peggy Walters, that Nancy would need help soon.

On the morning of February 12, a Sunday, the granny woman was there at the cabin. And she and Tom Lincoln and the moaning Nancy Hanks welcomed into a world of battle and blood, of whispering dreams and wistful dust, a new child, a boy.

A little later that morning Tom Lincoln threw some extra wood on the fire, and an extra bearskin over the mother, went out of the cabin, and walked two miles up the road to where the Sparrows, Tom and Betsy, lived. Dennis Hanks, the nine-year-old boy adopted by the Sparrows, met Tom at the door.

In his slow way of talking—he was a slow and a quiet man—Tom Lincoln told them, "Nancy's got a boy baby."¹ A half-sheepish look was in his eyes, as though maybe more babies were not wanted in Kentucky just then.

The boy, Dennis Hanks, took to his feet, down the road to the Lincoln cabin. There he saw Nancy Hanks on a bed of poles cleated to a corner of the cabin, under warm bearskins.

She turned her dark head from looking at the baby to look at Dennis and threw him a tired, white smile from her mouth and gray eyes. He stood by the bed, his eyes wide open, watching the even, quiet breaths, of this fresh, soft red baby.

"What you goin' to name him, Nancy?" the boy asked.

"Abraham," was the answer, "after his grandfather."

Soon came Betsy Sparrow. She washed the baby, put a yellow petticoat and a linsey shirt on him, cooked dried berries with wild honey for Nancy, put the one-room cabin in better order, kissed Nancy and comforted her, and went home.

Little Dennis rolled up in a bearskin and slept by the fireplace that night. He listened for the crying of the newborn child once in the night and the feet of the father moving on the dirt floor to help the mother and the little one. In the morning he took a long look at the baby and said to himself, "Its skin looks just like red cherry pulp squeezed dry, in wrinkles."

He asked if he could hold the baby. Nancy, as she passed the little one into Dennis's arms, said, "Be keerful, Dennis, fur you air the fust boy he's ever seen."

And Dennis swung the baby back and forth, keeping up a chatter about how tickled he was to have a new cousin to play with. The baby screwed up the muscles of its face and began crying with no let-up.

Dennis turned to Betsy Sparrow, handed her the baby and said to her, "Aunt, take him! He'll never come to much."

So came the birth of Abraham Lincoln that 12th of February in the year 1809—in silence and pain from a wilderness mother on a bed of corn-husks

¹ These words are from the Eleanor Atkinson interview with Dennis Hanks. Throughout this work conversational utterances are based word for word on sources deemed authentic.—The Author.

and bearskins—with an early laughing child prophecy he would never come to much.

And though he was born in a house with only one door and one window, it was written he would come to know many doors, many windows; he would read many riddles and doors and windows.

The Lincoln family lived three crop years on the farm where baby Abraham was born. It was a discouraging piece of land with yellow and red clay, stony soils, thick underbrush, land known as "barrens." It was called the Rock Spring farm because at the foot of one of its sloping hills the rocks curved in like the beginning of a cave; coats of moss spotted the rocks and rambled with quiet streaks of green over the gray; a ledge of rock formed a beckoning roof with room for people to stand under; and at the heart of it, for its centre, was a never-ending flow of clear, cool water.

With the baby she called Abe in her arms, Nancy Hanks came to this Rock Spring more than once, sitting with her child and her thoughts, looking at running water and green moss. The secrets of the mingled drone and hush of the place gave her reminders of Bible language, "Be ye comforted," or "Peace, be still."

Cooking, washing, sewing, spinning, weaving, helping keep a home for a man and two babies, besides herself, in a one-room cabin, took a good deal of her time. If there were flies creeping over the face of the baby Abe, she had to drop her work and shoo the flies away. There were few hours in the year she was free to sit with her child and her thoughts, listening to the changing drone and hush of Rock Spring saying, "Be ye comforted," or "Peace, be still."

The baby grew, learning to sit up, to crawl over the dirt floor of the cabin; the gristle became bone; the father joked about the long legs getting longer; the mother joked about how quick he grew out of one shirt into another.

Sparrows and Hankses who came visiting said, "He's solemn as a papoose." An easy and a light bundle he was to carry when the family moved to a farm on Knob Creek, eight miles from Hodgenville, on the main highway from Louisville to Nashville.

5

On the Knob Creek farm the child Abraham Lincoln learned to talk, to form words with the tongue and the roof of the mouth and the force of the breath from lungs and throat. "Pappy" and "Mammy," the words of his people meaning father and mother, were among the first syllables. He learned what the word "name" meant; his name was Abraham, the same as Abraham in the Bible, the same as his grandfather Abraham. It was "Abe" for short; if his mother called in the dark, "Is that you, Abe?" he answered, "Yes, Mammy, it's me." The name of the family he belonged to was "Lincoln" or "Linkun," though most people called it "Linkern" and it was sometimes spelled "Linkhorn."

The family lived there on Knob Creek farm, from the time Abe was three or so till he was past seven years of age. Here he was told "Kaintucky"

meant the state he was living in; Knob Creek farm, the Rock Spring farm where he was born, Hodgenville, Elizabethtown, Muldraugh's Hill, these places he knew, the land he walked on, was all part of Kentucky.

Yet it was also part of something bigger. Men had been fighting, bleeding, and dying in war, for a country, "our country"; a man couldn't have more than one country any more than he could have more than one mother; the name of the mother country was the "United States"; and there was a piece of cloth with red and white stripes having a blue square in its corner filled with white stars; and this piece of cloth they called "a flag." The flag meant the "United States." One summer morning his father started the day by stepping out of the front door and shooting a long rifle into the sky; and his father explained it was the day to make a big noise because it was the "Fourth of July," the day the United States first called itself a "free and independent" nation.

His folks talked like other folks in the neighborhood. They called themselves "pore" people. A man learned in books was "edicated." What was certain was "sartin." The syllables came through the nose; joints were "j'int"; fruit "spiled" instead of spoiling; in corn-planting time they "drapped" the seeds. They went on errands and "brung" things back. Their dogs "follered" the coons. Flannel was "flannen," a bandanna a "bandanner," a chimney a "chimbly," a shadow a "shadder," and mosquitoes plain "skeeters." They "gethered" crops. A creek was a "crick," a cover a "kiver."

A man silent was a "say-nothin'." They asked, "Have ye et?" There were dialogues, "Kin ye?" "No, I cain't." And if a woman had an idea of doing something she said, "I had a idy to." They made their own words. Those who spoke otherwise didn't belong, were "puttin' on." This was their wilderness lingo; it had gnarled bones and gaunt hours of their lives in it.

Words like "independent" bothered the boy. He was hungry to understand the meanings of words. He would ask what "independent" meant and when he was told the meaning he lay awake nights thinking about the meaning of the meaning of "independent." Other words bothered him, such as "predestination." He asked the meaning of that and lay awake hours at night thinking about the meaning of the meaning.

6

Seven-year-old Abe walked four miles a day going to the Knob Creek school to learn to read and write. Zachariah Riney and Caleb Hazel were the teachers who brought him along from A B C to where he could write the name "A-b-r-a-h-a-m L-i-n-c-o-l-n" and count numbers beginning with one, two, three, and so on. He heard twice two is four.

The schoolhouse was built of logs, with a dirt floor, no window, one door. The scholars learned their lessons by saying them to themselves out loud till it was time to recite; alphabets, multiplication tables, and the letters of spelled words were all in the air at once. It was a "blab school"; so they called it.

The Louisville and Nashville pike running past the Lincoln cabin had many

different travelers. Covered wagons came with settlers moving south and west, or north to Ohio and Indiana; there were peddlers with knickknacks to spread out and tell the prices of; congressmen, members of the legislature meeting at Lexington, men who had visited Henry Clay at Ashland.

Coming back from a fishing trip, with one fish, Abe met a soldier who came from fighting in the Battle of New Orleans with General Jackson, and Abe, remembering his father and mother had told him to be good to soldiers, handed the soldier the one fish.

The Lincolns got well acquainted with Christopher Columbus Graham, a doctor, a scientist, who was beginning to study and write books about the rocks, flowers, plants, trees, and wild animals of Kentucky; Graham slept in the bed while the Lincolns slept on the floor of the cabin, more than once; he told in the evening talk about days camping with Daniel Boone, and running backward with Boone so as to make foot-tracks pointing forward to mislead the Indians; he talked about stones, leaves, bones, snake-skins he was carrying in a sack back to Louisville; he mentioned a young storekeeper at Elizabethtown, named John James Audubon, who had marvelous ways with birds and might some day write a great book about birds. The boy Abe heard traveling preachers and his father talk about the times when they held church meetings in cabins, and every man had his rifle by his side, and there were other men with rifles outside the cabin door, ready for Indians who might try to interrupt their Sabbath worship. And the boy never liked it when the talkers slung around words like "independent" and "predestination," because he lay awake thinking about those long words.

Abe was the chore-boy of the Knob Creek farm as soon as he grew big enough to run errands, to hold a pine-knot at night lighting his father at a job, or to carry water, fill the woodbox, clean ashes from the fireplace, hoe weeds, pick berries, grapes, persimmons for beer-making. He hunted the timbers and came back with walnuts, hickory and hazel nuts. His hands knew the stinging blisters from using a hoe-handle back and forth a summer afternoon, and in autumn the mash of walnut-stain that wouldn't wash off, with all the rinsing and scrubbing of Nancy Hanks's homemade soap. He went swimming with Austin Gollaher; they got their backs sunburnt so the skin peeled off.

Wearing only a shirt—no hat nor pants—Abe rode a horse hitched to a "bull-tongue" plow of wood shod with iron. He helped his father with seed corn, beans, onions, potatoes. He ducked out of the way of the heels of the stallion and brood mares his father kept and paid taxes on.

The father would ride away to auctions, once coming home with dishes, plates, spoons, and a wash basin, another time with a heifer, and again with a wagon that had been knocked down to the highest bidder for 8½ cents.

Abe and his sister picked pails of currants and blueberries for mother Nancy to spread in the sun to dry and put away for winter eating. There were wild grapes and pawpaws; there were bee trees with wild honey; there were wild crabapples and red haws. If it was a good corn year, the children helped shell the corn by hand and put it between two big flat stones, grinding

it into cornmeal. The creeks gave them fish to fry. Tom Lincoln took his gun and brought back prairie turkey, partridge, rabbit, sometimes a coon, a bear, or a deer; and the skins of these big animals were tanned, cut and sewed into shirts, trousers, moccasins; the coonskins made caps.

There were lean times and fat, all depending on the weather, the rains or floods, how Tom Lincoln worked and what luck he had fishing and hunting. There were times when they lived on the fat of the land and said God was good; other times when they just scraped along and said they hoped the next world would be better than this one.

It was wilderness. Life dripped with fat and ease. Or it took hold with hunger and cold. All the older settlers remembered winter in the year 1795, when "cold Friday" came; Kentucky was "cold as Canada," and cows froze to death in the open fields. The wilderness is careless.

Between the roadway over the top of Muldraugh's Hill and the swimming-hole where Abe Lincoln and Austin Gollaher ducked each other, there are tall hills more correctly called limestone bluffs. They crowd around Knob Creek and shape the valley's form. Their foundations are rocks, their measurements seem to be those of low mountains rather than hills. They seem to be aware of proportions and to suggest a quiet importance and secrets of fire, erosion, water, time, and many repeated processes that have stood them against the sky so that human settlers in the valley feel that around them are speakers of reserves and immensities.

The valley through which Knob Creek wanders there near Muldraugh's Hill, shooting its deep rushes of water when the hill rains flush the bottoms, has many keepers of the darker reticences of the crust of the earth and the changers that hold on to their lives there. That basic stream has a journal of its movement among pools inconceivably quiet in their mirrorings during days when the weather is fair and the elements of the sky at ease, and again of movement among those same pools when the rampages between the limestone banks send the water boiling and swirling. The naming of Muldraugh's Hill was a rich act in connotation, for it has whisperings of namelessly shrewd and beautiful wishes that the older and darker landscapes of Ireland breathe.

Trees crowd up its slopes with passionate footholds as though called by homes in the rocky soil; their climbings have covered sides and crests till they murmur, "You shall see no tall hills here unless you look at us." Caverns and ledges thrust their surprises of witchery and wizardry, of gnomes and passwords, or again of old-time intimations and analogues, memories of reckless rains leaving wave-prints to hint or say Muldraugh's Hill and the Knob Creek valley are old-timers in the making of the world, old-timers alongside of the two-footed little mover known as man. In the bottom lands the honeysuckle ranges with a strength nothing less than fierce; so deep are its roots that, unless torn away by the machines of man, the bees count on every year a boomer harvest of its honey-stuff; black and brown butterflies, spotted and streaked with scrolls and alphabets of unknown tongues from the world of wings—these come back every year to the honeysuckle.

Redbud, wild rose, and white daisies that look like scatterings of snow on

green levels rise up with their faces yearly. Birds have made the valley a home; oncoming civilization has not shut off their hopes; homes for all are here; the martins learned a thousand years before the white man came that ten martins that fight with despair can kill and pick the eyes out of the head of a hawk that comes to slaughter and eat martins. And horses have so loved the valley, and it has so loved them in return, that some of the fastest saddle and riding nags remembered of men got their flying starts here.

Such was the exterior of the place and neighborhood where Abe Lincoln grew up from three to seven years of age, where he heard travelers talk, where he learned to write and sign his name, where, in fact, he first learned the meanings of names and how to answer, "Yes, it's me," if his mother called in the dark, "Is that you, Abe?"

7

In the year 1816 Tom Lincoln was appointed road surveyor. The paper naming him for that office said he was named in place of George Redman to repair the road "leading from Nolen to Pendleton, which lies between the Bigg Hill and the Rolling Fork." It further commanded "that all hands that assisted said Redman do assist Lincoln in keeping said road in repair." It was a pasty red clay road. That the county was beginning to think about good roads showed that civilization was breaking through on the wilderness. And that Tom Lincoln was named as road surveyor showed they were holding some respect for him as a citizen and taxpayer of that community. At the county courthouse the recorder of deeds noticed that Thomas Lincoln signed his name, while his wife, Nancy, made her mark.

Thomas Lincoln
Nancy Lincoln
mark

Knob Creek settlers taking their corn to Hodgens Mill or riding to Elizabethtown to pay their taxes at the court or collect bounties on wolfskins at the county courthouse, talked a good deal about land-titles, landowners, landlords, land-laws, land-lawyers, land-sharks. Tom Lincoln about that time was chopping down trees and cutting brush on the Knob Creek land so as to clear more ground, raise corn on it and make a farm out of it. And he wasn't satisfied; he was suspicious that even if he did get his thirty acres cleared and paid for, the land might be taken away from him. This was happening to other settlers; they had the wrong kind of papers. Pioneers and settlers who for years had been fighting Indians, wolves, foxes, mosquitoes, and malaria had seen their land taken away; they had the wrong kind of papers. Daniel Boone, the first man to break a path from civilization through and into the Kentucky wilderness, found himself one day with all his rich, bluegrass Ken-

tucky lands gone, not an acre of his big farms left; he had the wrong kind of papers; that was why he moved from Kentucky to Missouri.

Though Tom Lincoln was paying taxes on his thirty-acre farm, he was sued as a "tresspasser." He had to prove he wasn't a squatter—which he did. He went to court and won his suit. His little thirty-acre piece was only one of many pieces of a 10,000-acre tract surveyed in 1784 and patented to one man, Thomas Middleton, in 1786.

Poor white men were having a harder time to get along. Hardin County had been filling up with Negroes, slave black men, bought and sold among the rich and well-to-do. The Hodgens, La Rues, and other first families usually had one or two, or six or a dozen, Negroes. More than half the population of Hardin County were colored. And it seemed that as more slave black men were brought in, a poor white man didn't count for so much; he had a harder time to get along; he was free with the freedom of him who cannot be sold nor bought, while the black slave was free with the security of the useful horse, mule, cow, goat, or dog whose life and health is worth money to the owner.

Already, in parts of Kentucky and farther south, the poor white men, their women and children, were using the name of "nigger" for the slaves, while there were black slaves in families of quality who used the name of "po' w'ite" for the white people who owned only their clothes, furniture, a rifle, an ax, perhaps a horse and plow, and no land, no slaves, no stables, and no property to speak of.

While these changes were coming in Kentucky, the territory of Indiana came into the Union as a state whose law declared "all men are born equally free and independent" and "the holding any part of the human creation in slavery, or involuntary servitude, can only originate in usurpation and tyranny." In crossing the Ohio River's two shores, a traveler touched two soils, one where the buying and selling of black slaves went on, the other where the Negro was held to be "part of human creation" and was not property for buying and selling. But both soils were part of the Union of states.

Letters and reports reaching Hardin County about this time told of rich, black lands in Indiana, with more bushels of corn to the acre than down in Kentucky, Government land with clear title, the right kind of papers, for two dollars an acre. This helped Tom Lincoln to decide in the year 1816 to move to Indiana. He told the family he would build a flatboat, load the household goods on it, float by creeks to the Ohio River, leave the household goods somewhere along the river while he went afoot up into Indiana, located his land, and registered it. Then he would come back, and the family, afoot and on horseback, would move to the new farm and home.

8

The boy, Abe, had his thoughts, some running ahead wondering how Indiana would look, some going back to his seven little years in Kentucky. Here he had curled around his mother's apron, watched her face and listened

to her reading the Bible at the cabin log-fire, her fingers rambling through his hair, the hands patting him on the cheek and under the chin. God was real to his mother; he tried to make pictures in his head of the face of God far off and away in the sky, watching Kentucky, Hodgenville, Knob Creek, and all the rest of the world He had made. His thoughts could go back to the first time on a winter night around the fire when he lay flat on his stomach listening to his father as he told about his brothers, Mordecai and Josiah, and their father, Abraham Lincoln, who had staked out claims for more than 2,000 acres of land on the Green River. One day Abraham Lincoln and his three boys were working in a field; all of a sudden the father doubled up with a groan of pain and crumpled to the ground, just after the boys had heard a rifle-shot and the whining of a bullet. "Indians," the boys yelled to each other.

And Mordecai ran to a cabin, Josiah started across the fields and woods to a fort to bring help, while Tom Lincoln—little knee-high Tom—stooped over his father's bleeding body and wondered what he could do. He looked up to see an Indian standing over him, and a shining bangle hanging down over the Indian's shoulder close to the heart.

The Indian clutched upward with his hands, doubled with a groan and crumpled to the ground; Mordecai with a rifle at a peephole in the cabin had aimed his rifle at the shining bangle hanging down close to the Indian's heart, and Tom was so near he heard the bullet plug its hole into the red man.

And for years after that Mordecai Lincoln hated Indians with a deadly hate; if he heard that Indians were loose anywhere in a half-day's riding, he took his best rifles, pistols, and knives, and went Indian-killing.

There was Dr. Christopher Columbus Graham from Louisville, telling how the Indians were chasing Daniel Boone, and Boone saw a grapevine climbing high up a big oak; and he cut the grapevine near the root, took a run and a swing and made a jump of forty feet, so the Indians had to lose time finding sight and smell of his foot-tracks again.

And there were caves, worth remembering about in that part of Kentucky, and especially the biggest one of all, Mammoth Cave, fifty miles south; they said a thousand wagons could drive in and there would be room for another thousand.

And there was the foxy Austin Gollaher, his playmate. Up a tree he climbed one time, Abe dropped a pawpaw down into a coonskin cap; he guessed it was Austin's cap he was putting a smear of pawpaw mash in, but Austin had seen the trick coming and changed caps. So he had to wipe the smear out of his own cap.

Once he was walking on a log across Knob Creek when the rains had raised the creek. Just under the log, and under his feet, was the rush of the yellow muddy water. The log was slippery, his feet slippery. His feet went up in the air, he tumbled to the bottom of the creek; he came up, slipped again, came up with his nose and eyes full of water, and then saw Austin Gollaher on the bank holding out a long pole. He took hold of the pole and Austin pulled him to the bank.

Maybe he would grow up; his feet would be farther away from his head and his chin if he grew up; he could pick apples without climbing a tree or throwing clubs—if he grew up. Maybe then, after growing up, he would know more about those words he heard men saying, “in-de-pend-ent,” “pre-des-ti-na-tion.” Daniel Boone—yes, he could understand about Daniel Boone—wearing moccasins and a buckskin shirt. But George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, and the President in Washington, James Madison—they were far off; they were sort of like God; it was hard to make pictures of their faces.

How many times he had gone to the family Bible, opened the big front cover, and peeped in at the page which tells what the book is! There were the words: “The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with Arguments prefixed to the Different Books and Moral and Theological Observations illustrating each Chapter, composed by the Reverend Mr. Osterwald, Professor of Divinity.” And then pages and pages filled with words spelled out like the words in the spelling-book he had in school. So many words: heavy words—mysterious words!

About wolf heads, he could understand. He saw a man in Elizabethtown one time carrying two big wolf heads. The man had shot the wolves and was going to the courthouse, where they paid money for wolf heads. Yes, this he could understand. Wolves kill sheep and cattle in the fields; they come to the barns for pigs and chickens; he had heard them howling and sniffing on winter nights around the Knob Creek cabin and up the hills and gorges.

And there was his mother, his “mammy,” the woman other people called Nancy or Nancy Hanks. . . . It was so dark and strange about her. There was such sweetness. Yet there used to be more sweetness and a fresher sweetness. There had been one baby they buried. Then there was Sally—and him, little Abe. Did the children cost her something? Did they pull her down? . . . The baby that came and was laid away so soon, only three days after it came, in so little a grave: that hurt his mother; she was sick and tired more often after that. . . . There were such lights and shadows back in her eyes. She wanted—what did she want? There were more and more days he had to take care of her, when he loved to bring cool drinking water to her—or anything she asked for.

Well—a boy seven years old isn’t supposed to know much; he goes along and tries to do what the big people tell him to do. . . . They have been young and seen trouble: maybe they know. . . . He would get up in the morning when they called him; he would run to the spring for water. . . . He was only seven years old—and there were lots of frisky tricks he wanted to know more about.

He was a “shirt-tail boy.” . . . Three boys teased him one day when he took corn to Hodgen’s Mill; they wouldn’t be satisfied till he had punched their noses. . . . A clerk in the store at Elizabethtown gave him maple sugar to sit on a syrup keg and suck while his mother bought salt and flour. And the clerk was the only man he knew who was wearing store clothes, Sunday

clothes, every day in the week. . . . The two pear trees his father planted on the Rock Spring farm . . . the faces of two goats a man kept down in Hodgenville . . . Dennis Hanks saying, "Abe, your face is solemn as a papoose."

It wouldn't be easy to forget that Saturday afternoon in corn-planting time when other boys dropped the seed-corn into all the rows in the big seven-acre field—and Abe dropped the pumpkin seed. He dropped two seeds at every other hill and every other row. The next Sunday morning there came a big rain in the hills; it didn't rain a drop in the valley, but the water came down the gorges and slides, and washed ground, corn, pumpkin seeds, and all clear off the field.

A dark blur of thoughts, pictures, memories and hopes moved through the head of little seven-year-old Abe. The family was going to move again. There was hope of better luck up north in Indiana. Tom's older brother, Josiah, was farming along the Big Blue River. Rich black corn-land was over there in "Indianny," more bushels to the acre than anywhere in Kentucky.

9

In the fall of the year 1816, Abe watched his father cut down trees, cut out logs, and fasten those logs into a flatboat on Knob Creek. Abe ran after tools his father called for, sometimes held a hammer, a saw and a knife in his hands ready to give his father the next one called for. If his father said, "Fetch me a drink of water," the boy fetched; his legs belonged to his father. He helped carry chairs, tables, household goods, and carpenter's tools, loading them onto the flatboat. These, with four hundred gallons of whisky, "ten bar'ls," Tom had loaded onto the boat, made quite a cargo. Tom Lincoln, who was not much of a drinking man, had traded his farm for whisky, which was a kind of money in that day, and \$20.00 cash.

Nancy Hanks and Sarah and Abe stayed on the farm while the husband and father floated down Knob Creek to Salt River and into the Ohio River. Tom was out of luck when the flatboat turned over so that the tool chest, household goods and four barrels of whisky slid out of the boat. Most of the whisky and some of the other goods he managed to fish up from the river bottom. Then he crossed the Ohio River, landed on the Indiana side at Thompson's Ferry and left his whisky and household goods at the house of a man called Posey.

He started off on foot into the big timbers of what was then Perry County, later divided into Spencer County. He decided to live and to farm on a quarter-section of land on Little Pigeon Creek; he notched the trees with his ax, cleared away brush and piled it, as the Government land-laws required. This was his "claim," later filed at the Land Office in Vincennes, Indiana, as the Southwest Quarter of Section Thirty-two, Town Four South, Range Five West, to be paid for at \$2.00 an acre. His Indiana homestead was now ready for a cabin and a family; he walked back to the Knob Creek home in Ken-

tucky and told the family he reckoned they'd all put in the winter up in "Indianny."

They had fifty miles to go, in a straight line "as the crow flies," but about one hundred miles with all the zigzags and curves around hills, timbers, creeks, and rivers.

Pots, pans, kettles, blankets, the family Bible, and other things were put into bags and loaded on two horses. Nancy and Sarah climbed on one horse, Tom and Abe on the other. When it was hard going for the horses, the father and mother walked. Part of the way on that hundred-mile ride made little Abe's eyes open. They were going deeper into the wilderness. In Kentucky there were ten people to the square mile and in Indiana only three. As Abe sat on the horse plodding along, he saw miles and miles of beeches, oaks, elms, hard and soft maples, hung and run over with the scarlet streamers and the shifting gray hazes of autumn.

Then they came to the Ohio River. The Frenchmen years before named it "La Belle Rivière," meaning it was a sheen of water as good to look at as a beautiful woman. There she lay—the biggest stretch of shining water his eyes had ever seen. And Abe thought how different it was from Knob Creek, which he could walk across on a log—if he didn't let his feet slip from under. They crossed the river, and at the house of the man called Posey they got a wagon, loaded the barrels of whisky and the household goods, and drove sixteen miles to their "claim." The trail was so narrow that a few times Tom Lincoln got off the wagon with an ax and cut brush and trees so the wagon could pass through. It was a hired wagon and horses they came with, and the wagon and horse-team were taken back to Posey.

Tom Lincoln, his wife, boy, and girl, had arrived on a claim at Little Pigeon Creek, without a horse or a cow, without a house, with a little piece of land under their feet and the wintry sky high over. Naked they had come into the world; almost naked they came to Little Pigeon Creek, Indiana.

The whole family pitched in and built a pole-shed or "half-faced camp." On a slope of ground stood two trees about fourteen feet apart, east and west. These formed the two strong corner-posts of a sort of cabin with three sides, the fourth side open, facing south. The sides and the roof were covered with poles, branches, brush, dried grass, mud; chinks were stuffed where the wind or the rain was trying to come through. At the open side a log-fire was kept burning night and day. In the two far corners inside the camp were beds of dry leaves on the ground. To these beds the sleepers brought their blankets and bearskins.

Here they lived a year. In the summer time and fair weather, the pole-shed was snug enough. When the rain storms or wind and snow broke through and drenched the place, or when the south or southwest wind blew the fire-smoke into the camp so those inside had to clear out, it was a rough life.

The mother sang. Nancy Hanks knew songs her mother, Lucy, had heard in Virginia. The ballad of Fair Ellender told of the hero coming home with the Brown Girl who had lands and gold. Fair Ellender taunted: "Is this your bride? She seemeth me plagued brown." And for that, the Brown Girl

leaped over a table corner and put a slim little knife through Fair Ellender's heart. Then out came the hero's sword and he cut off the Brown Girl's head and "slung it agin the wall." Then he put the sword through his own heart.

And there was the ballad of Wicked Polly, who danced and ran wild and told the old folks, "I'll turn to God when I get old, and He will then receive my soul." But when death struck her down while she was young and running wild, she called for her mother, and with rolling eyeballs, cried, "When I am dead, remember well, your wicked Polly screams in hell."

Tom chopped logs for a cabin forty yards away while Abe did the best he could helping Nancy and Sarah trim the branches off the logs, cut brush, clear ground for planting, hoe weeds, tend the log-fire. The heaviest regular chore of the children was walking a mile away to a spring and carrying a bucket of water back home. Their food was mostly game shot in the woods near by; they went barefoot most of the year; in the winter their shoes were homemade moccasins; they were up with the sun and the early birds in the morning; their lighting at night was fire-logs and pine-knots. In summer and early fall the flies and mosquitoes swarmed.

In the new cabin Tom Lincoln was building, and on this little Pigeon Creek farm, the Lincoln family was going to live fourteen years.

IO

As Abe Lincoln, seven years old, going on eight, went to sleep on his bed of dry leaves in a corner of the pole-shed there on Little Pigeon Creek, in Indiana, in the winter of 1816, he had his thoughts, his feelings, his impressions. He shut his eyes, and looking-glasses began to work inside his head; he could see Kentucky and the Knob Creek farm again; he could see the Ohio River shining so far across that he couldn't begin to throw a stone from one side to the other.

And while his eyes were shut he could see the inside of the pole-shed, the floor of earth and grass, the frying-pan, the cooking-pot, the water-pail he and his sister carried full of water from the spring a mile away, and the log-fire always kept burning. And sometimes his imagination, his shut eyes and their quick-changing looking-glasses would bring the whole outdoor sky and land indoors, into the pole-shed, into the big shifting looking-glasses inside of his head. The mystery of imagination, of the faculty of reconstruction and piecing together today the things his eyes had seen yesterday, this took hold of him and he brooded over it.

One night he tried to sleep while his head was working on the meaning of the heavy and mysterious words standing dark on the pages of the family Bible; the stories his mother told him from those pages; all the people in the world drowned, the world covered with water, even Indiana and Kentucky, all people drowned except Noah and his family; the man Jonah swallowed by a whale and after days coming out of the belly of the whale; the Last Day to come, the stars dropping out of the sky, the world swallowed up in fire.

And one night this boy felt the southwest wind blowing the log-fire smoke

into his nostrils. And there was a hoot-owl crying, and a shaking of branches in the beeches and walnuts outside, so that he went to the south opening of the shed and looked out on a winter sky with a high quarter-moon and a white shine of thin frost on the long open spaces of the sky.

And an old wonder took a deeper hold on him, a wonder about the loneliness of life down there in the Indiana wilderness, and a wonder about what was happening in other places over the world, places he had heard people mention, cities, rivers, flags, wars, Jerusalem, Washington, Baltimore.

He might have asked the moon, "What do you see?" And the moon might have told him many things.

That year of 1816 the moon had seen sixteen thousand wagons come along one turnpike in Pennsylvania, heading west, with people hungry for new land, a new home, just like Tom Lincoln. Up the Mississippi River that year had come the first steamboat to curve into the Ohio River and land passengers at Louisville. The moon had seen the first steamboat leave Pittsburgh and tie up at New Orleans. New wheels, wagons, were coming, an iron horse snorting fire and smoke. Rolling-mills, ingots, iron, steel, were the talk of Pennsylvania; a sheet copper mill was starting in Massachusetts.

The moon could see eight million people in the United States, white men who had pushed the Indians over the eastern mountains, fighting to clear the Great Plains and the southern valleys of the red men. At Fallen Timbers and at Tippecanoe in Indiana, and down at the Great Bend of the Tallapoosa, the pale faces and copper faces had yelled and grappled and Weatherford had said, "I have done the white people all the harm I could; if I had an army I would fight to the last; my warriors can no longer hear my voice; their bones are at Talladega, Tallushatches, Emuckfaw, and Tohopeka; I can do no more than weep." The red men had been warned by Jefferson to settle down and be farmers, to double their numbers every twenty years as the white people did, the whites in "new swarms continually advancing upon the country like flocks of pigeons."

The moon had seen two men, sunburned, wind-bitten and scarred, arrive at the White House just four years before Abe Lincoln was born. The two men had been on a three-year trip, leaving Washington in 1802, riding and walking across the Great Plains, the Rockies and Sierras, to the Pacific Coast country, and then back to Washington. What those two, Lewis and Clark, had to tell, opened the eyes of white people to what a rich, big country they lived in. Out along that trail Jefferson could see "new swarms advancing like flocks of pigeons."

And how had these eight million people come to America, for the moon to look down on and watch their westward swarming? Many were children of men who had quarreled in the old countries of Europe, and fought wars about the words and ways of worshiping God and obeying His commandments. They were Puritans from England, French Huguenots, German Pietists, Hanoverians, Moravians, Saxons, Austrians, Swiss, Quakers, all carrying their Bibles. Also there were Ulster Presbyterians from North Ireland,

and Scotch Presbyterians. They came by their own wish. Others who came not by their own wish were fifty thousand thieves and murderers sent from British prisons and courts. Dr. Samuel Johnson, the same man who said, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel," had called Americans "a race of convicts." Convicted men in England, offered the choice of hanging or being shipped to America, had given the answer, "Hang me."

The moon had seen boys and girls by thousands kidnapped off the streets of English cities and smuggled across to America. And each year for fifty years there had come a thousand to fifteen hundred "indentured servants," men and women who had signed papers to work for a certain master, the law holding them to work till their time was up.

The moon had seen sailing-ships start from ports in Europe and take from six weeks to six months crossing the Atlantic. Aboard those ships often were "stench, fumes, vomiting, many kinds of sicknesses, fever, dysentery, scurvy, the mouth-rot, and the like, all of which come from old and sharply salted food and meat, also from bad and foul water."

Such were a few of the things known to the fathers and grandfathers of part of the eight million people in America that the moon was looking down on in the winter nights of 1816. And in the years to come the moon would see more and more people coming from Europe.

Seldom had the moon in its thousands of years of looking down on the earth and the human family seen such a man as the Napoleon Bonaparte whose bayonets had been going in Europe for fifteen years, shoving kings off thrones, changing laws, maps, books, raising armies, using them up, and raising new armies, until people in some regions were saying, "The red roses of this year grow from the blood-wet ground of the wars we fought last year." And at last the terrible Napoleon was caged, jailed, on the lonely island of St. Helena. Crying for the "liberty and equality" of France to be spread over the world, he had led armies to believe and dream of beating down all other armies in Europe that tried to stand against him. Then he was a lean shadow; he had become fat; the paunch stuck out farther than is allowed to conquerors. He had hugged armfuls of battle-flags to his breast while telling an army of soldiers, "I cannot embrace you all, but I do so in the person of your general." It hurt his ears when, captured and being driven in an open carriage, he heard sarcastic people along the streets mock at him with the call, "Long live the Emperor!" He would die far from home, with regrets, the first man to be Napoleonic.

When Napoleon sold to Jefferson the Great Plains between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, the moon saw only a few Indians, buffalo hunters and drifters, living there. The price for the land was fifteen million dollars; Jefferson had to argue with people who said the price was too high. Such things the moon had seen. Also, out of war-taxed and war-crippled Europe the moon could see steady lines of ships taking people from that part of the Round World across the water to America. Also, lines of ships sailing to Africa with whisky, calico, and silk, and coming back loaded with Negroes.

And as the wagons, by thousands a year, were slipping through the passes of

the Allegheny Mountains, heading west for the two-dollar-an-acre Government land, many steered clear of the South; they couldn't buy slaves; and they were suspicious of slavery; it was safer to go farming where white men did all the work. At first the stream of wagons and settlers moving west had kept close to the Ohio River. Then it began spreading in a fan-shape up north and west.

The moon could see along the pikes, roads, and trails heading west, broken wagon-wheels with prairie grass growing up over the spokes and hubs. And near by, sometimes, a rusty skillet, empty moccasins, and the bones of horses and men.

In the hot dog-days, in the long rains, in the casual blizzards, they had stuck it out—and lost. There came a saying, a pithy, perhaps brutal folk proverb, “The cowards never started and the weak ones died by the way.”

Such were a few of the many, many things the moon might have told little Abe Lincoln, nearly eight years old, on a winter night in 1816 on Little Pigeon Creek, in the Buckhorn Valley, in southern Indiana—a high quarter-moon with a white shine of thin frost on the long open spaces of the sky.

He was of the blood and breath of many of these things, and would know them better in the years to come.

II

During the year 1817, little Abe Lincoln, eight years old, going on nine, had an ax put in his hands and helped his father cut down trees and notch logs for the corners of their new cabin, forty yards from the pole-shed where the family was cooking, eating, and sleeping.

Wild turkey, ruffed grouse, partridge, coon, rabbit, were to be had for the shooting of them. Before each shot Tom Lincoln took a rifle-ball out of a bag and held the ball in his left hand; then with his right hand holding the gun-powder horn he pulled the stopper with his teeth, slipped the powder into the barrel, followed with the ball; then he rammed the charge down the barrel with a hickory ramrod held in both hands, looked to his trigger, flint, and feather in the touch-hole—and he was ready to shoot—to kill for the home skillet.

Having loaded his rifle just that way several thousand times in his life, he could do it in the dark or with his eyes shut. Once Abe took the gun as a flock of wild turkeys came toward the new log cabin, and, standing inside, shot through a crack and killed one of the big birds; and after that, somehow, he never felt like pulling the trigger on game-birds. A mile from the cabin was a salt lick where deer came; there the boy could have easily shot the animals, as they stood rubbing their tongues along the salty slabs or tasting of a saltish ooze. His father did the shooting; the deer killed gave them meat for Nancy's skillet; and the skins were tanned, cut, and stitched into shirts, trousers, mitts, moccasins. They wore buckskin; their valley was called the Buckhorn Valley.

After months the cabin stood up, four walls fitted together with a roof, a

one-room house eighteen feet square, for a family to live in. A stick chimney plastered with clay ran up outside. The floor was packed and smoothed dirt. A log-fire lighted the inside; no windows were cut in the walls. For a door there was a hole cut to stoop through. Bedsteads were cleated to the corners of the cabin; pegs stuck in the side of a wall made a ladder for young Abe to climb up in a loft to sleep on a hump of dry leaves; rain and snow came through chinks of the roof onto his bearskin cover. A table and three-legged stools had the top sides smoothed with an ax, and the bark-side under, in the style called "puncheon."

A few days of this year in which the cabin was building, Nancy told Abe to wash his face and hands extra clean; she combed his hair, held his face between her two hands, smacked him a kiss on the mouth, and sent him to school—nine miles and back—Abe and Sally hand in hand hiking eighteen miles a day. Tom Lincoln used to say Abe was going to have "a real eddication," explaining, "You air a-goin' to larn readin', writin', and cipherin'."

He learned to spell words he didn't know the meaning of, spelling the words before he used them in sentences. In a list of "words of eight syllables accented upon the sixth," was the word "incomprehensibilty." He learned that first, and then such sentences as "Is he to go in?" and "Ann can spin flax."

Some neighbors said, "It's a pore make-out of a school," and Tom complained it was a waste of time to send the children nine miles just to sit with a lot of other children and read out loud all day in a "blab" school. But Nancy, as she cleaned Abe's ears in corners where he forgot to clean them, and as she combed out the tangles in his coarse, sandy black hair, used to say, "Abe, you go to school now, and larn all you kin." And he kissed her and said, "Yes, Mammy," and started with his sister on the nine-mile walk through timberland where bear, deer, coon, and wildcats ran wild.

Fall time came with its early frost and they were moved into the new cabin, when horses and a wagon came breaking into the clearing one day. It was Tom and Betsy Sparrow and their seventeen-year-old boy, Dennis Hanks, who had come from Hodgenville, Kentucky, to cook and sleep in the pole-shed of the Lincoln family till they could locate land and settle. Hardly a year had passed, however, when both Tom and Betsy Sparrow were taken down with the "milk sick," beginning with a whitish coat on the tongue. Both died and were buried in October on a little hill in a clearing in the timbers near by.

Soon after, there came to Nancy Hanks Lincoln that white coating of the tongue; her vitals burned; the tongue turned brownish; her feet and hands grew cold and colder, her pulse slow and slower. She knew she was dying, called for her children, and spoke to them her last choking words. Sarah and Abe leaned over the bed. A bony hand of the struggling mother went out, putting its fingers into the boy's sandy black hair; her fluttering guttural words seemed to say he must grow up and be good to his sister and father.

So, on a bed of poles cleated to the corner of the cabin, the body of Nancy Hanks Lincoln lay, looking tired . . . tired . . . with a peace settling in the pinched corners of the sweet, weary mouth, silence slowly etching away the lines of pain and hunger drawn around the gray eyes where now the eyelids

closed down in the fine pathos of unbroken rest, a sleep without interruption settling about the form of the stooped and wasted shoulder-bones, looking to the children who tiptoed in, stood still, cried their tears of want and longing, whispered "Mammy, Mammy," and heard only their own whispers answering, looking to these little ones of her brood as though new secrets had come to her in place of the old secrets given up with the breath of life.

And Tom Lincoln took a log left over from the building of the cabin, and he and Dennis Hanks whipsawed the log into planks, planed the planks smooth, and made them of a measure for a box to bury the dead wife and mother in. Little Abe, with a jackknife, whittled pine-wood pegs. And then, while Dennis and Abe held the planks, Tom bored holes and stuck the whittled pegs through the bored holes. This was the coffin, and they carried it the next day to the same little timber clearing near by, where a few weeks before they had buried Tom and Betsy Sparrow. It was in the way of the deer-run leading to the saltish water; light feet and shy hoofs ran over those early winter graves.

So the woman, Nancy Hanks, died, thirty-six years old, a pioneer sacrifice, with memories of monotonous, endless everyday chores, of mystic Bible verses read over and over for their promises, and with memories of blue wistful hills and a summer when the crab-apple blossoms flamed white and she carried a boy-child into the world.

She had looked out on fields of blue-blossoming flax and hummed "Hey, Betty Martin, tiptoe, tiptoe"; she had sung of bright kingdoms by and by and seen the early frost leaf its crystals on the stalks of buttonweed and red-bud; she had sung:

You may bury me in the east,
You may bury me in the west,
And we'll all rise together in that morning.

12

Some weeks later, when David Elkin, elder of the Methodist church, was in that neighborhood, he was called on to speak over the grave of Nancy Hanks. He had been acquainted with her in Kentucky, and to the Lincoln family and a few neighbors he spoke of good things she had done, sweet ways she had of living her life in this Vale of Tears, and her faith in another life yonder past the River Jordan.

The "milk sick" took more people in that neighborhood the same year, and Tom Lincoln whipsawed planks for more coffins. One settler lost four milch cows and eleven calves. The nearest doctor for people or cattle was thirty-five miles away. The wilderness is careless.

Lonesome and dark months came for Abe and Sarah. Worst of all were the weeks after their father went away, promising to come back.

Elizabethtown, Kentucky, was the place Tom Lincoln headed for. As he footed it through the woods and across the Ohio River, he was saying over

to himself a speech—the words he would say to Sarah Bush Johnston, down in Elizabethtown. Her husband had died a few years before, and she was now in Tom's thoughts.

He went straight to the house where she was living in Elizabethtown, and, speaking to her as "Miss Johnston," he argued: "I have no wife and you no husband. I came a-purpose to marry you. I knowed you from a gal and you knowed me from a boy. I've no time to lose; and if you're willin' let it be done straight off."

Her answer was, "I got debts." She gave him a list of the debts; he paid them; a license was issued; and they were married on December 2, 1819.

He could write his name; she couldn't write hers. Trying to explain why the two of them took up with each other so quickly, Dennis Hanks at a later time said, "Tom had a kind o' way with women, an' maybe it was somethin' she took comfort in to have a man that didn't drink an' cuss none."

Little Abe and Sarah, living in the lonesome cabin on Little Pigeon Creek, Indiana, got a nice surprise one morning when four horses and a wagon came into their clearing, and their father jumped off, then Sarah Bush Lincoln, the new wife and mother, then John, Sarah, and Matilda Johnston, Sarah Bush's three children by her first husband. Next off the wagon came a feather mattress, feather pillows, a black walnut bureau, a large clothes-chest, a table, chairs, pots and skillets, knives, forks, spoons.

Abe ran his fingers over the slick wood of the bureau, pushed his fist into the feather pillows, sat in the new chairs, and wondered to himself, because this was the first time he had touched such fine things, such soft slick things.

"Here's your new mammy," his father told Abe as the boy looked up at a strong, large-boned, rosy woman, with a kindly face and eyes, with a steady voice, steady ways. The cheekbones of her face stood out and she had a strong jaw-bone; she was warm and friendly for Abe's little hands to touch, right from the beginning. As one of her big hands held his head against her skirt he felt like a cold chick warming under the soft feathers of a big wing. She took the corn-husks Abe had been sleeping on, piled them in the yard and said they would be good for a pig-pen later on; and Abe sunk his head and bones that night in a feather pillow and a feather mattress.

Ten years pass with that cabin on Little Pigeon Creek for a home, and that farm and neighborhood the soil for growth. There the boy Abe grows to be the young man, Abraham Lincoln.

Ten years pass and the roots of a tree spread out finding water to carry up to branches and leaves that are in the sun; the trunk thickens, the forked limbs shine wider in the sun, they pray with their leaves in the rain and the whining wind; the tree arrives, the mystery of its coming, spreading, growing, a secret not even known to the tree itself; it stands with its arms stretched to the corners the four winds come from, with its murmured testimony, "We are here, we arrived, our roots are in the earth of these years," and beyond that short declaration, it speaks nothing of the decrees, fates, accidents, destinies, that made it an apparition of its particular moment.

Abe Lincoln grows up. His father talks about the waste of time in "eddic-

tion"; it is enough "to larn readin', writin', cipherin'"; but the stanch, yearning stepmother, Sarah Bush Lincoln, comes between the boy and the father. And the father listens to the stepmother and lets her have her way.

13

When he was eleven years old, Abe Lincoln's young body began to change. The juices and glands began to make a long, tall boy out of him. As the months and years went by, he noticed his lean wrists getting longer, his legs too, and he was now looking over the heads of other boys. Men said, "Land o' Goshen, that boy air a-growin'!"

As he took on more length, they said he was shooting up into the air like green corn in the summer of a good corn-year. So he grew. When he reached seventeen years of age, and they measured him, he was six feet, nearly four inches, high, from the bottoms of his moccasins to the top of his skull.

These were years he was handling the ax. Except in spring plowing-time and the fall fodder-pulling, he was handling the ax nearly all the time. The insides of his hands took on callus thick as leather. He cleared openings in the timber, cut logs and puncheons, split firewood, built pig-pens.

He learned how to measure with his eye the half-circle swing of the ax so as to nick out the deepest possible chip from off a tree-trunk. The trick of swaying his body easily on the hips so as to throw the heaviest possible weight into the blow of the ax—he learned that.

On winter mornings he wiped the frost from the ax-handle, sniffed sparkles of air into his lungs, and beat a steady cleaving of blows into a big tree—till it fell—and he sat on the main log and ate his noon dinner of corn bread and fried salt pork—and joked with the gray squirrels that frisked and peeped at him from high forks of near-by walnut trees.

He learned how to make his ax flash and bite into a sugar-maple or a sycamore. The outside and the inside look of black walnut and black oak, hickory and jack oak, elm and white oak, sassafras, dogwood, grapevines, sumac—he came on their secrets. He could guess close to the time of the year, to the week of the month, by the way the leaves and branches of trees looked. He sniffed the seasons.

Often he worked alone in the timbers, all day long with only the sound of his own ax, or his own voice speaking to himself, or the crackling and swaying of branches in the wind, and the cries and whirs of animals, of brown and silver-gray squirrels, of partridges, hawks, crows, turkeys, sparrows, and the occasional wildcats.

The tricks and whimsies of the sky, how to read clear skies and cloudy weather, the creeping vines of ivy and wild grape, the recurrence of dogwood blossoms in spring, the ways of snow, rain, drizzle, sleet, the visitors of sky and weather coming and going hour by hour—he tried to read their secrets, he tried to be friendly with their mystery.

So he grew, to become hard, tough, wiry. The muscle on his bones and the cords, tendons, cross-weaves of fiber, and nerve centres, these became instru-

ments to obey his wishes. He found with other men he could lift his own end of a log—and more too. One of the neighbors said he was strong as three men. Another said, "He can sink an ax deeper into wood than any man I ever saw." And another, "If you heard him fellin' trees in a clearin', you would say there was three men at work by the way the trees fell."

He was more than a tough, long, rawboned boy. He amazed men with his man's lifting power. He put his shoulders under a new-built corncrib one day and walked away with it to where the farmer wanted it. Four men, ready with poles to put under it and carry it, didn't need their poles. He played the same trick with a chicken house; at the new, growing town of Gentryville near by, they said the chicken house weighed six hundred pounds, and only a big boy with a hard backbone could get under it and walk away with it.

A blacksmith shop, a grocery, and a store had started up on the crossroads of the Gentry farm. And one night after Abe had been helping thresh wheat on Dave Turnham's place, he went with Dennis Hanks, John Johnston, and some other boys to Gentryville where the farm-hands sat around with John Baldwin, the blacksmith, and Jones, the storekeeper, passed the whisky jug, told stories, and talked politics and religion and gossip. Going home late that night, they saw something in a mud puddle alongside the road. They stepped over to see whether it was a man or a hog. It was a man—drunk—snoring—sleeping off his drunk—on a frosty night outdoors in a cold wind.

They shook him by the shoulders, doubled his knees to his stomach, but he went on sleeping, snoring. The cold wind was getting colder. The other boys said they were going home, and they went away leaving Abe alone with the snoring sleeper in the mud puddle. Abe stepped into the mud, reached arms around the man, slung him over his shoulders, carried him to Dennis Hanks's cabin, built a fire, rubbed him warm and left him sleeping off the whisky.

And the man afterward said Abe saved his life. He told John Hanks, "It was mighty clever of Abe to tote me to a warm fire that night."

So he grew, living in that Pigeon Creek cabin for a home, sleeping in the loft, climbing up at night to a bed just under the roof, where sometimes the snow and the rain drove through the cracks, eating sometimes at a table where the family had only one thing to eat—potatoes. Once at the table, when there were only potatoes, his father spoke a blessing to the Lord for potatoes; the boy murmured, "Those are mighty poor blessings." And Abe made jokes once when company came and Sally Bush Lincoln brought out raw potatoes, gave the visitors a knife apiece, and they all peeled raw potatoes, and talked about the crops, politics, religion, gossip.

Days when they had only potatoes to eat didn't come often. Other days in the year they had "yaller-legged chicken" with gravy, and corn dodgers with shortening, and berries and honey. They tasted of bear meat, deer, coon, quail, grouse, prairie turkey, catfish, bass, perch.

Abe knew the sleep that comes after long hours of work outdoors, the feeling of simple food changing into blood and muscle as he worked in those young years clearing timberland for pasture and corn crops, cutting loose the brush, piling it and burning it, splitting rails, pulling the crosscut saw and the

whipsaw, driving the shovel-plow, harrowing, planting, hoeing, pulling fodder, milking cows, churning butter, helping neighbors at house-raisings, log-rollings, corn-huskings.

He found he was fast, strong, and keen when he went against other boys in sports. On farms where he worked, he held his own at scuffling, knocking off hats, wrestling. The time came when around Gentryville and Spencer County he was known as the best "rassler" of all, the champion. In jumping, foot-racing, throwing the maul, pitching the crowbar, he carried away the decisions against the lads of his own age always, and usually won against those older than himself.

He earned his board, clothes, and lodgings, sometimes working for a neighbor farmer. He watched his father, while helping make cabinets, coffins, cupboards, window frames, doors. Hammers, saws, pegs, cleats, he understood first-hand, also the scythe and the cradle for cutting hay and grain, the corn-cutter's knife, the leather piece to protect the hand while shucking corn, and the horse, the dog, the cow, the ox, the hog. He could skin and cure the hides of coon and deer. He lifted the slippery two-hundred-pound hog carcass, head down, holding the hind hocks up for others of the gang to hook, and swung the animal clear of the ground. He learned where to stick a hog in the under side of the neck so as to bleed it to death, how to split it in two, and carve out the chops, the parts for sausage grinding, for hams, for "cracklings."

Farmers called him to butcher for them at thirty-one cents a day, this when he was sixteen and seventeen years old. He could "knock a beef in the head," swing a maul and hit a cow between the eyes, skin the hide, halve and quarter it, carve out the tallow, the steaks, kidneys, liver.

And the hiding-places of fresh spring water under the earth crust had to be in his thoughts; he helped at well-digging; the wells Tom Lincoln dug went dry one year after another; neighbors said Tom was always digging a well and had his land "honeycombed"; and the boy, Abe, ran the errands and held the tools for the well-digging.

When he was eighteen years old, he could take an ax at the end of the handle and hold it out in a straight horizontal line, easy and steady—he had strong shoulder muscles and steady wrists early in life. He walked thirty-four miles in one day, just on an errand, to please himself, to hear a lawyer make a speech. He could tell his body to do almost impossible things, and the body obeyed.

Growing from boy to man, he was alone a good deal of the time. Days came often when he was by himself all the time except at breakfast and supper hours in the cabin home. In some years more of his time was spent in loneliness than in the company of other people. It happened, too, that this loneliness he knew was not like that of people in cities who can look from a window on streets where faces pass and repass. It was the wilderness loneliness he became acquainted with, solved, filtered through body, eye, and brain, held communion with in his ears, in the temples of his forehead, in the works of his beating heart.

He lived with trees, with the bush wet with shining raindrops, with the burning bush of autumn, with the lone wild duck riding a north wind and crying down on a line north to south, the faces of open sky and weather, the ax which is an individual one-man instrument, these he had for companions, books, friends, talkers, chums of his endless changing soliloquies.

His moccasin feet in the winter-time knew the white spaces of snowdrifts piled in whimsical shapes against timber slopes or blown in levels across the fields of last year's cut corn stalks; in the summer-time his bare feet toughened in the gravel of green streams while he laughed back to the chatter of bluejays in the red-haw trees or while he kept his eyes ready in the slough quack-grass for the cow-snake, the rattler, the copperhead.

He rested between spells of work in the springtime when the upward push of the coming out of the new grass can be heard, and in autumn weeks when the rustle of a single falling leaf lets go a whisper that a listening ear can catch.

He found his life thrown in ways where there was a certain chance for a certain growth. And so he grew. Silence found him; he met silence. In the making of him as he was, the element of silence was immense.

14

It was a little country of families living in one-room cabins. Dennis Hanks said at a later time, "We lived the same as the Indians, 'ceptin' we took an interest in politics and religion."

Cash was scarce; venison hams, bacon slabs, and barrels of whisky served as money; there were seasons when storekeepers asked customers, "What kind of money have you today?" because so many sorts of wildcat dollar bills were passing around. In sections of timberland, wild hogs were nosing out a fat living on hickory nuts, walnuts, acorns; it was said the country would be full of wild hogs if the wolves didn't find the litters of young pigs a few weeks old and kill them.

Farmers lost thirty and forty sheep in a single wolf raid. Toward the end of June came "fly time," when cows lost weight and gave less milk because they had to fight flies. For two or three months at the end of summer, horses weakened, unless covered with blankets, under the attacks of horse-flies; where one lighted on a horse, a drop of blood oozed; horses were hitched to branches of trees that gave loose rein to the animals, room to move and fight flies.

Men and women went barefoot except in the colder weather; women carried their shoes in their hands and put them on just before arrival at church meetings or at social parties.

Rains came, loosening the top soil of the land where it was not held by grass roots; it was a yellow clay that softened to slush; in this yellow slush many a time Abe Lincoln walked ankle-deep; his bare feet were intimate with the clay dust of the hot dog-days, with the clay mud of spring and fall rains; he was at home in clay. In the timbers with his ax, on the way to chop, his toes, heels, soles, the balls of his feet, climbed and slid in banks and sluices of clay. In the corn-fields, plowing, hoeing, cutting, and shucking, again his bare feet spoke

with the clay of the earth; it was in his toenails and stuck on the skin of his toe-knuckles. The color of clay was one of his own colors.

In the short and simple annals of the poor, it seems there are people who breathe with the earth and take into their lungs and blood some of the hard and dark strength of its mystery. During six and seven months each year in the twelve fiercest formative years of his life, Abraham Lincoln had the pads of his foot-soles bare against clay of the earth. It may be the earth told him in her own tough gypsy slang one or two knacks of living worth keeping. To be organic with running wildfire and quiet rain, both of the same moment, is to be the carrier of wave-lines the earth gives up only on hard usage.

15

He took shape in a tall, long-armed cornhusker. When rain came in at the chinks of the cabin loft where he slept, soaking through the book Josiah Crawford loaned him, he pulled fodder two days to pay for the book, made a clean sweep, till there wasn't a blade left on a cornstalk in the field of Josiah Crawford.

His father was saying the big boy looked as if he had been roughhewn with an ax and needed smoothing with a jack-plane. "He was the ganglin'est, awkwardest feller that ever stepped over a ten-rail snake fence; he had t' duck to git through a door; he 'peared to be all j'int's."

His stepmother told him she didn't mind his bringing dirt into the house on his feet; she could scour the floor; but she asked him to keep his head washed or he'd be rubbing the dirt on her nice whitewashed rafters. He put barefoot boys to wading in a mud-puddle near the horse-trough, picked them up one by one, carried them to the house upside down, and walked their muddy feet across the ceiling. The mother came in, laughed an hour at the foot-tracks, told Abe he ought to be spanked—and he cleaned the ceiling so it looked new.

The mother said, "Abe never spoke a cross word to me in his life since we lived together." And she said Abe was truthful; when Tilda Johnston leaped onto Abe's back to give him a scare on a lonely timber path, she brought the big axman to the ground by pulling her hands against his shoulders and pressing her knee into his backbone. The ax-blade cut her ankle, and strips from Abe's shirt and Tilda's dress had to be used to stop the blood. By then she was sobbing over what to tell her mother. On Abe's advice she told her mother the whole truth.

As time went by, the stepmother of Abe became one of the rich, silent forces in his life. Besides keeping the floors, pots, pans, kettles, and milk-crocks spick and span, weaving, sewing, mending, and managing with sagacity and gump-tion, she had a massive, bony, human strength backed with an elemental faith that the foundations of the world were mortised by God with unspeakable goodness of heart toward the human family. Hard as life was, she was thankful to be alive.

Once she told Abe how her brother Isaac, back in Hardin County, had hot

words with a cowardly young man who shot Isaac without warning. The doctors asked Isaac if they could tie him down while they cut his flesh and took out the bullet. He told them he didn't need to be tied down; he put two lead musket-balls in between his teeth and ground his teeth on them while the doctors cut a slash nine inches long and one inch deep till they found the bullet and brought it out. Isaac never let out a moan or a whimper; he set his teeth into the musket-balls, ground them into flat sheets, and spat them from his mouth when he thanked the doctors.

Sally Bush, the stepmother, was all of a good mother to Abe. If he broke out laughing when others saw nothing to laugh at, she let it pass as a sign of his thoughts working their own way. So far as she was concerned he had a right to do unaccountable things; since he never lied to her, why not? So she justified him. When Abe's sister, Sarah, married Aaron Grigsby and a year after died with her newborn child, it was Sally Bush who spoke comfort to the eighteen-year-old boy of Nancy Hanks burying his sister and the wraith of a child.

A neighbor woman sized him up by saying, "He could work when he wanted to, but he was no hand to pitch in like killing snakes." John Romine made the remarks: "Abe Lincoln worked for me, but was always reading and thinking. I used to get mad at him for it. I say he was awful lazy. He would laugh and talk—crack his jokes and tell stories all the time; didn't love work half as much as his pay. He said to me one day that his father taught him to work, but he never taught him to love it."

A misunderstanding came up one time between Abe Lincoln and William Grigsby. It ended with Grigsby so mad he challenged Abe to a fight. Abe looked down at Grigsby, smiled, and said the fight ought to be with John Johnston, Abe's stepbrother. The day was set for the fight; each man was there with his seconds; the mauling began, with the two fighters stripped to the waist, beating and bruising each other with bare knuckles.

A crowd stood around, forming a ring, cheering, yelling, hissing, till after a while they saw Johnston getting the worst of it. Then the ring of people forming the crowd was broken as Abe Lincoln shouldered his way through, stepped out, took hold of Grigsby and threw that fighter out of the center of the fight-ring.

Then Abe Lincoln called out, "I'm the big buck of this lick." And looking around so his eyes swept the circle of the crowd he let loose the challenge, "If any of you want to try it, come on and whet your horns." A riot of wild fist-fighting came then between the two gangs and for months around the Jones grocery store there was talk about which gang whipped the other.

After a fox-chase with horses, Uncle Jimmy Larkin was telling how his horse won the race, was the best horse in the world, and never drew a long breath; Abe didn't listen; Uncle Jimmy told it again, and Abe said, "Why don't you tell us how many short breaths he drew?" It raised a laugh on Jimmy, who jumped around threatening to fight, till Abe said quietly, "Now, Larkin, if you don't shut up I'll throw you in that water."

Asked by Farmer James Taylor if he could kill a hog, he answered, "If you will risk the hog I'll risk myself."

He had the pride of youth that resents the slur, the snub, besides the riotous blood that has always led youth in reckless exploits. When he was cutting up didoes one day at the Crawford farm-house, Mrs. Crawford asked, "What's going to become of you, Abe?" And with mockery of swagger, he answered, "Me? I'm going to be president of the United States." His father's yellow cur, which always yelped and gave warning when Abe and John Johnston tried to get off for a coon-hunt or a trip to Jones's store, was picked up and taken along one night on a coon-hunt. The skin of the coon they killed that night was sewed onto the "yaller cur," which ran for home, was caught by bigger dogs and torn to pieces. Sore at some action of Josiah Crawford, who had purple veins on a large nose, Abe nicknamed him "Blue Nose" so that the nickname stuck.

He drew a red ear at a husking bee, kissed Green Taylor's girl, and in a fight the next day hit Green Taylor with an ear of corn, making a gash and a scar for life. For the day of the marriage of his sister Sarah to Aaron Grigsby, he wrote "Adam and Eve's Wedding Song," telling in doggerel how the Lord made woman from a rib taken from Adam's side. The three final verses read:

The woman was not taken
From Adam's feet, we see,
So he must not abuse her,
The meaning seems to be.

The woman was not taken
From Adam's head, we know,
To show she must not rule him—
Tis evidently so.

The woman she was taken
From under Adam's arm,
So she must be protected
From injuries and harm.

A farcical poem from Abe's pen was recited, with the climactic verse:

But Betsy she said, "You cursed baldhead,
My suitor you never can be.
Beside, your ill shape proclaims you an ape,
And that never can answer for me."

A favorite that Abe asked Dennis Hanks to sing began with the lines, "The turbaned Turk that scorns the world, and struts about with his whiskers curled," while Dennis had still another beginning, "Hail Columbia, happy land! If you ain't drunk then I'll be damned." But when Abe tried singing, "Poor Old Ned," Dennis would say he had the tune wrong and couldn't sing anyhow. Visitors to the Lincoln house were shown in a copy-book the scribbling:

Abraham Lincoln
his hand and pen.
he will be good but
god knows When.

In the hanging ballad of "John Anderson's Lamentations," Abe made his own verses, of which these are two:

Much intoxication my ruin has been,
And my dear companion hath barbarously slain:
In yonder cold graveyard the body doth lie;
Whilst I am condemned, and shortly must die.

Remember John Anderson's death, and reform
Before death overtakes you, and vengeance come on.
My grief's overwhelming; in God I must trust:
I am justly condemned; my sentence is just.

Driving a horse at the mill, he was sending the whiplash over the nag and calling, "Git up, you old hussy; git up, you old hussy." The horse let fly a hind foot that knocked down the big boy just as he yelled, "Git up." He lay bleeding, was taken home, washed, put to bed, and lay all night unconscious. As his eye winkers opened the next day and he came to, his tongue struggled and blurted, "You old hussy," thus finishing what he started to say before the knockdown.

He grew as hickory grows, the torso lengthening and toughening. The sap mounted, the branches spread, leaves came with wind clamor in them. A scorn sprang up betwixt him and the Grigsbys, who forgot to invite him to the double wedding of Reuben and Charles Grigsby on the same day marrying Betsy Ray and Matilda Hawkins. Shotes were roasted with fancy fixings, dancers tripped singing "Weevily Wheat," the brides and grooms were put to bed, but the young buck, Abe Lincoln, was not there. It was then he put into circulation a piece of writing titled, "The Chronicles of Reuben." It read:

Now there was a man whose name was Reuben, and the same was very great in substance; in horses and cattle and swine, and a very great household. It came to pass when the sons of Reuben grew up that they were desirous of taking to themselves wives, and being too well known as to honor in their own country they took a journey into a far country and there procured for themselves wives. It came to pass also that when they were about to make the return home they sent a messenger before them to bear the tidings to their parents. These, enquiring of the messengers what times their sons and wives would come, made a great feast and called all their kinsmen and neighbors in and made great preparations. When the time drew nigh they sent out two men to meet the grooms and their brides with a trumpet to welcome them and to accompany them. When they came near unto the house of Reuben, the father, the messenger came on before them and gave a shout, and the whole multitude ran out with shouts of joy and music, playing on all kinds of instruments. Some were playing on harps, some on viols, and some blowing on ram's horns. Some also were casting dust and ashes towards heaven, and chief among them all was Josiah, blowing his bugle and making

sound so great the neighboring hills and valleys echoed with the resounding acclamation. When they had played and their harps had sounded till the grooms and brides approached the gates, Reuben, the father, met them and welcomed them to his house. The wedding feast being now ready they were all invited to sit down and eat, placing their bridegrooms and their wives at each end of the table. Waiters were then appointed to serve and wait on the guests. When all had eaten and were full and merry they went out again and played and sung till night, and when they had made an end of feasting and rejoicing the multitude dispersed, each going to his own home. The family then took seats with their waiters to converse while preparations were being made in an upper chamber for the brides and grooms to be conveyed to their beds. This being done the waiters took the two brides upstairs, placing one in a bed at the right hand of the stairs and the other on the left. The waiters came down, and Nancy the mother then gave directions to the waiters of the bridegrooms, and they took them upstairs but placed them in the wrong beds. The waiters then all came downstairs. But the mother being fearful of a mistake, made enquiry of the waiters, and learning the true facts took the light and sprang upstairs. It came to pass she ran to one of the beds and exclaimed, "O Lord, Reuben, you are in bed with the wrong wife." The young men, both alarmed at this, sprang up out of bed and ran with such violence against each other they came near knocking each other down. The tumult gave evidence to those below that the mistake was certain. At last they all came down and had a long conversation about who made the mistake, but it could not be decided. So endeth the chapter.

One of the Grigsbys put the copy of "The Chronicles" in Abe Lincoln's handwriting up under the roof rafters of a house, where it was to stay hidden till carpenters came to put on a new roof. It was a lampoon, boisterous with the laughter of a strong young man, and yet keen with an accuracy of intentions that could deliver the thrust, "Being too well known as to honor in their own country they took a journey into a far country and there procured for themselves wives," and the fling at "Blue Nose" Josiah Crawford in "Chief among them all was Josiah, blowing his bugle."

Further back of its immediate surface of drollery, it had a finger of derision pointed at pretensions of grandeur; a whirl of little javelins at the assumption that Ivanhoe on a high horse or Babylonians in golden slippers might come and be at ease among the barefoot farmers and the fleabitten mares working on the land of Spencer County, Indiana.

Betsy Ray said years afterward: "Yes, they did have a joke on us. They said my man got into the wrong room, and Charles got into my room. But it wasn't so. Lincoln wrote that for mischief. Abe and my man often laughed about it."

16

While young Abe was growing up, he heard his father and John and Dennis Hanks tell neighbors this and that about their families, what kind of men and women they had for relatives, kinfolk, blood connections. And young Abe learned there were things the Lincolns and Hankses didn't care to tell the neighbors concerning Abe's mother Nancy and his grandmother Lucy.

About 1825 Lucy Hanks, the grandmother of Abe, had died, near to sixty years of age, the mother of eight children, James, Thomas, Henry, George, Elizabeth, Lucy, Peggy, and Polly. James and Henry had become ministers of the gospel. The children were all well brought up, and spoken of as honest, industrious, law-abiding and God-fearing citizens. Their father, Henry Sparrow, had married Lucy Hanks in 1791. She could read and write though her father and brothers couldn't.

Such things the Lincolns and Hankses were free to talk about with any of their neighbors, either in corn-shucking time or in the winter around the stove in Jones's store. They were proud of Lucy Hanks and her husband and the eight children respectably brought up.

They were less free to say that Nancy Hanks, the mother of Abe, was born in Virginia in 1784 when Lucy Hanks was nineteen years old, and seven years before Lucy married. And Joseph Hanks, the father of Lucy, had taken his family to Kentucky that same year.

In November, 1789, a grand jury of Mercer County had named Lucy Hanks as a loose woman; the clerk of the court was ordered to issue a summons for her arrest by the sheriff. Then five months had gone by, and Lucy Hanks came to the courthouse in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, and signed a certificate that she would marry Henry Sparrow on that day or as she wrote it, "enny other day." And she had waited a year, to show him perhaps what kind of life she could lead for the sake of a man she wanted to marry. And at the end of that year came the wedding of Lucy Hanks and Henry Sparrow. "And it turned out to be a love match."

Then two years passed and Joseph Hanks, the father of Lucy, died and left a will. To his son William (father of the same John Hanks who worked in the cornfields with young Abe Lincoln) was bequeathed "one gray horse called Gilbert." And he left his son Thomas "one sorrel horse called Major," while the son Joseph fell heir to "one sorrel horse called Bald" besides 150 acres of land. To his daughter Elizabeth he gave "one heifer yearling called Gentle," to his daughter Polly "one heifer yearling called Lady," and to his daughter Nancy "one heifer yearling called Peidy." The residue then went to his wife Nanny.

Thus the dead man had remembered in his will and given a piece of his property to four sons, three daughters and his wife. He had named and mentioned all of his family—except Lucy. She was the disobedient child, the daughter who had erringly darkened his door sills, and he died with a heart hardened against her, unforgiving to the last.

Yet it seemed that his punishment of Lucy made little difference with his daughter, Nancy, who lived to make a mistake like that of Lucy. For in 1799 Nancy's son, Dennis Hanks (who later helped Abe Lincoln build corncribs around Gentryville) was born several years before his mother married Levi Hall and moved to Indiana to die in the same plague that took away her husband and her niece Nancy Hanks, the mother of Abe Lincoln.

Thus life came and went and there were men and women who seemed to have been candles lighted and to be seen till a sudden gust of wind had come

and their lights no longer met the eyes; they had been; they no longer were.

One of the sisters of Lucy Hanks worth talking about was Betsy, the one given the heifer called Gentle. She had married Thomas Sparrow; they wanted children of their own but the wanted children didn't come; so they took into their house the children of others. When Lucy Hanks married Henry Sparrow, then Betsy and Tom Sparrow took in Nancy Hanks and raised Nancy Hanks till she married Tom Lincoln; to outsiders Nancy Hanks was sometimes known as Nancy Sparrow. They took in Dennis Hanks when Levi Hall married Nancy Hanks, the mother of Dennis. Yes, one of the sisters worth talking about was the big-hearted, ready-handed Betsy Sparrow with her door open and welcome to the children not so welcome in the homes of her sisters. She it was who had gone two miles down the road the morning little Abe Lincoln was born, to help wash the new baby and put a yellow petticoat on him.

Such were tissues of fact twisted through and around the births and the deaths of the men and the women of the Lincoln and Hanks clan, talked about sometimes in hushed and sober moments, sometimes perhaps late at night when monotonous, multitudinous rain came on the roof in late winter and early spring, when a chill was still on the air and the frost not yet out of the ground, and the logs of the home fire threw shadows that lengthened, lessened, and lengthened again along the puncheon floor and among the rafters where seed corn hung.

Back in the shadows of the years had lived the dark, strange woman, Lucy Hanks, with flame streaks in her. And the years had beaten on her head, and circumstance had squeezed at her heart and tried to smother her hopes. And she had lived to pick a man she wanted to marry and borne him eight children and brought them up to read and write in a time when few could read and still fewer could write so much as their own names.

Young Abe Lincoln was free to have his thoughts about this mother of his mother. He could ask himself about what is called "good" and what is called "bad" and how they are crisscrossed in the human mesh. He could ask whether sinners are always as crooked as painted; whether people who call themselves good are half the time as straight as the way they tell it.

Maybe he ought to go slow in any deep or fixed judgments about people. Did the ghost of his lovable mother or the phantom of his lovely grandmother seem to whisper something like that?

17

A mile across the fields from the Lincoln home was the Pigeon church, a log-built meeting-house put up in 1822 after many discussions among members about where to locate. On June 7, 1823, William Barker, who kept the minutes and records, wrote that the church "received Brother Thomas Lincoln by letter." He was elected the next year with two neighbors to serve as a committee of visitors to the Gilead church, and served three years as church trustee. Strict watch was kept on the conduct of members and Tom served on com-

mittees to look into reported misconduct between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, of neighbor against neighbor.

William Barker once entered the subscriptions for the support of the church as follows: "We the undersigned do assign our names to pay the several sums annexed to our names in produce this fall to be delivered betwixt the first and 20th of December the produce is as follows corn wheat whiskey pork Linnen wool or any other article or material to do the work with. the produce will be Delivered at the meting hoas in good marchanable produce." Among the subscribers was recorded, "undersigned"—"Thomas Lincoln in corn manufactured pounds 24."

Along with the earliest settlers in Indiana had come Catholic priests, and Baptist and Presbyterian preachers, and Methodist circuit riders. Churches had been organized, and the members, with prayer and songs, hewed the logs and raised the frames of their meeting-houses for worship. Time had been when the circuit-rider traveled with Bible in one hand and rifle in the other, preaching to members, sinners, and "scorners" in settlers' cabins or in timber groves. To the members, the Bible, and the lands, names, stories, texts, and teachings of the Bible, were overshadowing realities, to be read, thought over, interpreted, and used in daily life. To "grow in grace" and to arrive at "grace abounding," to be "strong in spirit," to "cast out delusion," were matters connected definitely with the daily life of arising, building a fire, breaking the ice sheets on water, and starting a kettle to boil, and then going forth to the chores of the barn and the horse-trough, the corncrib, the pigpen. Such biblical words as "malice," "mercy," and "charity" were topics of long explanations.

Most of the church people could read only the shortest words in the Bible, or none at all. They sat in the log meeting-house on the split-log benches their own axes had shaped, listening to the preacher reading from the Bible by the light of fire-logs. The pronunciation of the words Egypt, Mesopotamia, Babylon, Damascus, set minds to work imagining places less real to them than Rockport, Boonville, Vincennes, Cincinnati. Epithets and texts enunciated often by preachers became tissues of their spiritual lives; the words meant something beyond the actual words in "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth," "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," "by the waters of Babylon." They could see the direct inference to be drawn from, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge," or the suggestions in "Let not your heart be troubled," or "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone," or "As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

Their own morning-glories, honeysuckle, and blooming perennials came to leafage out of the rhythmic text, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." They felt enough portents in the two words, "Jesus wept," for the arrangement of that as a verse by itself.

At the Pigeon church one of the favorite hymns was "How Tedious and

Tasteless the Hours," and another, "Oh, to Grace How Great a Debtor!" and another began with the lines:

When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies.

To confess, to work hard, to be saving, to be decent, were the actions most praised and pleaded for in the sermons of the preachers. Next to denying Christ, the worst sins were drinking, gambling, fighting, loafing, among the men, and gossiping, backbiting, sloth, and slack habits, among the women. A place named Hell where men, women, and children burned everlastingly in fires was the place where sinners would go.

In a timber grove one summer Sunday afternoon, a preacher yelled, shrieked, wrung his hands in sobs of hysterics, until a row of women were laid out to rest and recover in the shade of an oak-tree, after they had moaned, shaken, danced up and down, worn themselves out with "the jerks" and fainted. And young Abe Lincoln, looking on, with sober face and quiet heart, was thoughtful about what he saw before his eyes.

The Sabbath was not only a day for religious meetings. After the sermon, the members, who rode horses many miles to the meeting-house, talked about crops, weather, births and deaths, the growing settlements, letters just come, politics, Indians, and land-titles.

Families had prayers in the morning on arising, grace at breakfast, noon prayers and grace at dinner, grace at supper, and evening prayers at bedtime. In those households, the manger at Bethlehem was a white miracle, the Black Friday at Golgotha and the rocks rolled away for the Resurrection were near-by realities of terror and comfort, dark power and sustenance. The Sabbath day, Christmas, Easter, were days for sober thoughts and sober faces, resignation, contemplation, rest, silence. Verses in the Gospel of St. John had rhythm and portent. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . . He that believeth in me shall not perish but shall have everlasting life."

Besides a wisdom of short syllables covering all the wants of life in the Lord's Prayer, they found a melodious movement of musical intention in the arrangement of its simple words. It was like a walk from a green valley to a great mountain to pronounce with thoughtful cadence: "Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

The glisten of dewdrops on wheat straws, in the gray chill of daybreak on harvest fields, shone in the solemn assurance of, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: . . . thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

There was occupation of the imaginative gift, a challenge even to the sleeping or crying senses of color and form, hidden in the picture of Jacob's ladder stretching from the man in earth-slumber up beyond the limits of sky; in the drama of Jonah entering the belly of the whale and later issuing forth from that darkness; in the swift stride of the four horsemen of the apocalypse; in the coat of many colors worn by Joseph and the dream of seven years of fam-

ine to come upon Egypt; in the flawless and clear-eyed sheep-boy David, walking with sling and stone to win battle against the stiff-necked giant Goliath by reason of one fierce stone pounded home to the forehead of the swaggerer; in the massive prefigurements of preparation for calamity or destruction of mortal pride to be found in the episodes of Noah's ark and the upthrust and come-down of the Tower of Babel.

After a day of plowing corn, watching crop pests, whittling bean-poles, capturing strayed cattle and fixing up a hole in a snake-rail fence, while the housewife made a kettle of soap, hoed the radishes and cabbages, milked the cows, and washed the baby, there was a consolation leading to easy slumber in the beatitudes: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. . . . Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." It was not their business to be sure of the arguments and the invincible logic that might underlie the Bible promises of heaven and threats of hell; it was for this the preacher was hired and paid by the corn, wheat, whisky, pork, linen, wool, and other produce brought by the members of the church.

The exquisite foretokening, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you," was but a carrying farther of the implications of that cry from the ramparts of the unconquerable, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Beyond Indiana was something else; beyond the timber and underbrush, the malaria, milk-sick, blood, sweat, tears, hands hard and crooked as the roots of walnut trees, there must be something else.

Young Abraham Lincoln saw certain of these Christians with a clean burning fire, with inner reckonings that prompted them to silence or action or speech, and they could justify themselves with a simple and final explanation that all things should be done decently and in order. Their door-strings were out to sinners deep in mire, to scorners seemingly past all redemption; the Jesus who lived with lawbreakers, thieves, lepers crying "Unclean!" was an instrument and a light vivifying into everyday use the abstractions behind the words "malice," "mercy," "charity."

They met understanding from the solemn young Lincoln who had refused to join his schoolmates in torturing a live mud-turtle, and had written a paper arguing against cruelty to animals; who when eleven years old took his father's rifle and shot a prairie turkey and had never since shot any game at all; who could butcher a beef or hog for food but didn't like to see rabbit blood; who wanted to be a river steamboat pilot but gave up in simple obedience when his father told him he was needed at home; who as a nine-year-old boy helped get a traveling preacher to speak some sort of final ceremonial words over the winter grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln; who would bother to lug on his shoulders and save from freezing the body of a man overloaded with whisky; who had seen one of his companions go insane and who used to get up before daylight and cross the fields to listen to the crooning, falsetto cackling, and disconnected babbling of one whose brain had suddenly lost control of things done decently and in order.

The footsteps of death, silent as the moving sundial of a tall sycamore, were a presence. Time and death, the partners who operate leaving no more track than mist, had to be reckoned in the scheme of life. A day is a shooting-star. The young Lincoln tried to rhyme this sentiment:

Time! what an empty vapor 'tis!
And days how swift they are:
Swift as an Indian arrow—
Fly on like a shooting star,
The present moment just is here,
Then slides away in haste,
That we can never say they're ours,
But only say they're past.

His mother Nancy Hanks and her baby that didn't live, his sister Sarah and her baby that didn't live—time and the empty vapor had taken them; the rain and the snow beat on their graves. The young man who was in his right mind and then began babbling week in and week out the droolings of a disordered brain—time had done it without warning. On both man and the animals, time and death had their way. In a single week, the milk-sick had taken four milch-cows and eleven calves of Dennis Hanks, while Dennis too had nearly gone under with a hard week of it.

At the Pigeon Creek settlement, while the structure of his bones, the build and hang of his torso and limbs, took shape, other elements, invisible, yet permanent, traced their lines in the tissues of his head and heart.

18

Pioneers are half gypsy. The lookout is on horizons from which at any time another and stranger wandersong may come calling and take the heart, to love or to kill, with gold or with ashes, with bluebirds burbling in ripe corn-fields or with rheumatism or hog cholera or mortgages, rust and bugs eating crops and farms into ruin.

They are luck-hunters. And luck—is it *yonder*? Over the horizon, over yonder—is there a calling and a calling? The pioneers, so often, are believers in luck . . . out yonder.

And always the worker on land, who puts in crops and bets on the weather and gambles in seed corn and hazards his toil against so many whimsical, fateful conditions, has a pull on his heart to believe he can read luck signs, and tell good luck or bad luck to come, in dreams of his sleep at night, in changes of the moon, in the manners of chickens and dogs, in little seeming accidents that reveal the intentions and operations of forces beyond sight and smell.

They have noticed certain coincidences operating to produce certain results in the past. And when again those coincidences arise they say frankly, "I'm superstitious—what happened before is liable to happen again." The simple saying among simple people, "If a bird lights in a window there will be a

death in that house," goes back to the fact that there have been deaths, and many of them, in houses to which a bird came and sat on a window-sill and picked his wings and put on dark assumptions.

Down in Indiana, as Abe Lincoln grew up, he cherished his sweet dreams, and let the bitter ones haunt him, and tried to search out from the muddled hugger-mugger of still other dreams whether the meaning was to be sweet or bitter. His father had had portentous dreams; his father told how in a night's sleep once he saw a wayside path to a strange house; he saw the inside walls, the chairs, the table, the fireplace in that house; at the fireside a woman was sitting, and her face, eyes, and lips came clear; she was paring an apple; she was the woman to be his wife. This was the dream, and in his night's sleep it came again and again; he could not shake it off. It haunted him till he went to the path, followed the path to the house, went inside and there saw the woman, sitting at the fireside paring an apple; her face, eyes, and lips were those he had seen so often in his night sleep; and the rest of his dream came to pass. Tom Lincoln had told this to his son, Abe, and the boy searched his dreams for meanings. He learned to say of certain coincidences, "I'm superstitious," feeling that what had happened before under certain combinations of events would probably happen again.

Even the water underground, the streams and springs, were whimsical, unreliable, ran by luck, it seemed, in southern Indiana. Not far from the Lincolns was a region where rivers dipped down into limestone and faded out of sight. "Lost rivers," they were called. In Wyandotte Cave a walker could go fifteen miles around the inside. In some counties there was no telling when a good well would give out and say, "No more water here."

Abe's father hired a man to come with a witch-hazel and tell by the way the magic stick pointed where to dig a well that wouldn't go dry. The well was dug where the witch-hazel said it should be dug. And that well went dry just as others before had on the Lincoln farm.

Besides superstitions there were sayings, to be spoken and guessed about, old pieces of whim and wisdom out of bygone generations of Kentuckians, of English, Scotch, and Irish souls. Potatoes, growing underground, must be planted in the dark of the moon, while beans, growing above-ground, must be planted in the light of the moon. The posts of a rail fence would sink in the ground if not set in the dark of the moon. Trees for rails must be cut in the early part of the day and in the light of the moon. If in planting corn you skipped a row there would be a death in the family. If you killed the first snake you saw in the spring, you would win against all your enemies that year. If rheumatism came, skunk-grease or red worm-oil rubbed where the ache was would cure it.

Steal a dishrag, people said, and hide it in a tree-stump and your wart will go away. If you have many warts, tie as many knots in a string as there are warts, and bury the string under a stone. A dog crossing a hunter's path means bad luck unless he hooks his two little fingers together and pulls till the dog is out of sight. Feed gunpowder to dogs and it will make them fierce. To start on a journey and see a white mule is bad luck. If a horse

breathes on a child, the child will have the whooping-cough. Buckeyes carried in the pocket keep off the rheumatism.

When a man is putting up a crop of hay or shucking a field of corn or driving a load of wood, the weather has a particular interest for him. Out of the lives of farmers, timber-workers, ox-drivers, in Kentucky and Indiana, have come sayings:

If the sun shines while it is raining, it will rain again the next day; birds and hens singing during the rain indicate fair weather; if roosters crow when they go to roost it is a sign of rain; the first thunder in the spring wakes up the snakes from their winter sleep; when chickens get on a fence during a rain and pick themselves, it is a sign of clear weather; when the rain gets thick and heavy, almost like mist, it will turn cold; if a bobwhite says bob only once there will be rain; rain from the east rains three days at least; if it rains before seven it will clear before eleven; if there is lightning in the north it will rain in twenty-four hours; lightning in the south means dry weather.

"If a man can't skin he must hold a leg while someone else does," was a saying among the butcher gangs Abe Lincoln worked with. Men in those gangs would indicate a short distance by saying it was "far as you can throw a bull by the tail." A strong whisky "would make a rabbit spit in a dog's face." There were admonitions: "Spit against the wind and you spit in your own face," "Don't see all you see, and don't hear all you hear."

Then, too, there were sayings spoken among the men only, out of barn-life and handling cattle and hogs; the daily chores required understanding of the necessary habits of men and animals.

And naturally in field and kitchen, among young and old, there were the phrases and epithets, "as plain as the nose on your face; as easy as licking a dish; as welcome as the flowers in May; as bare as the back of my hand; before the cat can lick her ear; as red as a spanked baby."

And there were eloquent Irish with blessings, maledictions, and proverbs. "Better be red-headed than be without a head." "No man can live longer at peace than his neighbors like." "I think his face is made of a fiddle; everyone that looks on him loves him." "She's as dirty as a slut that's too lazy to lick herself." "A liar must have a good memory." "It's an ill fight where he that wins has the worst of it." "Hills look green that are far away." "It will be all the same after you're dead a hundred years."

Among the young people were whimsies often spoken and seldom believed. Fancy was on a loose leash in some of these. "If you can make your first and little finger meet over the back of your hand, you will marry." "If you spit on a chunk of firewood and speak your sweetheart's name, he will come before it burns out." "The new moon must never be seen through the trees when making a wish." "If a butterfly comes into the house a lady will call wearing a dress the color of the butterfly." "If you sing before breakfast you will cry before night." "If the fire roars there will be a quarrel in the family."

"If two hens fight in the barnyard there will be two ladies calling." "If your ears burn somebody is gossiping about you." "If your hand itches you

will get a present or shake hands with a stranger; if your right foot itches you are going on a journey; if the left foot itches you are going where you are not wanted; if your nose itches away from home you are wanted at home, but if your nose itches at home someone is coming to see you; if your right eye itches you will cry and if it is the left eye you will laugh." "If you break a looking-glass you will have seven years of bad luck." "If you let a baby under a year old look in the mirror it will die." "It is bad luck to step over a broom."

Among the games played at parties by the young people in Indiana was the farm classic "Skip-to-My-Lou" which tells of a little red wagon painted blue, a mule in the cellar kicking up through, chickens in the haystack shoo shoo shoo, flies in the cream jar shoo shoo shoo, rabbits in the bean patch two by two.

Hurry up slow poke, do oh do,
Hurry up slow poke, do oh do,
Hurry up slow poke, do oh do,
Skip to my Lou, my darling.

I'll get her back in spite of you,
I'll get her back in spite of you,
I'll get her back in spite of you,
Skip to my Lou, my darling.

Gone again, what shall I do?
Gone again, what shall I do?
Gone again, what shall I do?
Skip to my Lou, my darling.

I'll get another one sweeter than you,
I'll get another one sweeter than you,
I'll get another one sweeter than you,
Skip to my Lou, my darling.

And there were other classics such as "Way Down in the Pawpaw Patch," "All Chaw Hay on the Corner," "Pig in the Parlor," "Old Bald Eagle, Sail Around," and "Pop Goes the Weasel." The game of "Old Sister Phoebe," with a quaint British strain, had song couplets:

Old Sister Phoebe, how merry were we,
The night we sat under the juniper tree,
The juniper tree, high-o, high-o,
The juniper tree, high-o.

Take this hat on your head, keep your head warm,
And take a sweet kiss, it will do you no harm.

It will do you no harm, but a great deal of good,
And so take another while kissing goes good.

In "Thus the Farmer Sows His Seed," an ancient human dialogue is rehearsed:

Come, my love, and go with me,
And I will take good care of thee.

I am too young, I am not fit.
I cannot leave my mamma yet.

You're old enough, you are just right,
I asked your mamma last Saturday night.

Among a people who spun their own wool and wove their own cloth, as their forefathers had done, there was the inheritance of the game of "Weevily Wheat," danced somewhat like the Virginia Reel, with singing passages:

O Charley, he's a fine young man,
O Charley, he's a dandy,
He loves to hug and kiss the girls,
And feed 'em on good candy.

The higher up the cherry tree,
The riper grow the cherries,
The more you hug and kiss the girls,
The sooner they will marry.

My pretty little pink, I suppose you think
I care but little about you.
But I'll let you know before you go,
I cannot do without you.

It's left hand round your weevily wheat.
It's both hands round your weevily wheat.
Come down this way with your weevily wheat.
It's swing, oh, swing, your weevily wheat.

Among the best-remembered favorites in the neighborhood around the Lincoln farm in Indiana were "Skip to My Lou," "Old Sister Phoebe," "Thus the Farmer Sows His Seed," and "Weevily Wheat."

They had patriotic songs for the Fourth of July, chief of which was "Hail Columbia," printed as follows:

Hail! Columbia, happy land!
Hail! ye heroes, heav'n-born band,
Who faught and bled in freedom's cause,
Who faught, &c.

And when the storm of war is gone,
Enjoy the peace your valor won;
Let independence be your boast,
Ever mindful what it cost,
Ever grateful for the prize,
May its altar reach the skies.

19

The farm boys in their evenings at Jones's store in Gentryville talked about how Abe Lincoln was always reading, digging into books, stretching out flat on his stomach in front of the fireplace, studying till midnight and past midnight, picking a piece of charcoal to write on the fire shovel, shaving off what he wrote, and then writing more—till midnight and past midnight. The next thing Abe would be reading books between the plow handles, it seemed to them. And once trying to speak a last word, Dennis Hanks said, "There's suthin' peculiarsome about Abe."

He wanted to learn, to know, to live, to reach out; he wanted to satisfy hungers and thirsts he couldn't tell about, this big boy of the backwoods. And some of what he wanted so much, so deep down, seemed to be in the books. Maybe in books he would find the answers to dark questions pushing around in the pools of his thoughts and the drifts of his mind. He told Dennis and other people, "The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who'll git me a book I ain't read." And sometimes friends answered, "Well, books ain't as plenty as wildcats in these parts o' Indianny."

This was one thing meant by Dennis when he said there was "suthin' peculiarsome" about Abe. It seemed that Abe made the books tell him more than they told other people. All the other farm boys had gone to school and read "The Kentucky Preceptor," but Abe picked out questions from it, such as "Who has the most right to complain, the Indian or the Negro?" and Abe would talk about it, up one way and down the other, while they were in the cornfield pulling fodder for the winter. When Abe got hold of a storybook and read about a boat that came near a magnetic rock, and how the magnets in the rock pulled all the nails out of the boat so it went to pieces and the people in the boat found themselves floundering in water, Abe thought it was funny and told it to other people. After Abe read poetry, especially Bobby Burns's poems, Abe began writing rhymes himself. When Abe sat with a girl, with their bare feet in the creek water, and she spoke of the moon rising, he explained to her it was the earth moving and not the moon—the moon only seemed to rise.

John Hanks, who worked in the fields barefooted with Abe, grubbing stumps, plowing, mowing, said: "When Abe and I came back to the house from work, he used to go to the cupboard, snatch a piece of corn bread, sit down, take a book, cock his legs up high as his head, and read. Whenever Abe had a chance in the field while at work, or at the house, he would stop and read." He liked to explain to other people what he was getting from books; explaining an idea to someone else made it clearer to him. The habit was growing on him of reading out loud; words came more real if picked from the silent page of the book and pronounced on the tongue; new balances and values of words stood out if spoken aloud. When writing letters for his father or the neighbors, he read the words out loud as they got written. Before writing a letter he asked questions such as: "What do you want to say

in the letter? How do you want to say it? Are you sure that's the best way to say it? Or do you think we can fix up a better way to say it?"

As he studied his books his lower lip stuck out; Josiah Crawford noticed it was a habit and joked Abe about the "stuck-out lip." This habit too stayed with him.

He wrote in his Sum Book or arithmetic that Compound Division was "When several numbers of Divers Denominations are given to be divided by 1 common divisor," and worked on the exercise in multiplication; "If 1 foot contain 12 inches I demand how many there are in 126 feet." Thus the school-boy.

What he got in the schools didn't satisfy him. He went to three different schools in Indiana, besides two in Kentucky—together about four months of school. He learned his A B C, how to spell, read, write. And he had been with the other barefoot boys in butternut jeans learning "manners" under the school teacher, Andrew Crawford, who had them open a door, walk in, and say, "Howdy do?" Yet what he tasted of books in school was only a beginning, only made him hungry and thirsty, shook him with a wanting and a wanting of more and more of what was hidden between the covers of books.

He kept on saying, "The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who'll git me a book I ain't read." He said that to Pitcher, the lawyer over at Rockport, nearly twenty miles away, one fall afternoon, when he walked from Pigeon Creek to Rockport and borrowed a book from Pitcher. Then when fodder-pulling time came a few days later, he shucked corn from early daylight till sundown along with his father and Dennis Hanks and John Hanks, but after supper he read the book till midnight, and at noon he hardly knew the taste of his cornbread because he had the book in front of him. It was a hundred little things like these which made Dennis Hanks say there was "suthin' peculiarsome" about Abe.

Besides reading the family Bible and figuring his way all through the old arithmetic they had at home, he got hold of "Aesop's Fables," "Pilgrim's Progress," "Robinson Crusoe," and Weems's "The Life of Francis Marion." The book of fables, written or collected thousands of years ago by the Greek slave, known as Aesop, sank deep in his mind. As he read through the book a second and third time, he had a feeling there were fables all around him, that everything he touched and handled, everything he saw and learned had a fable wrapped in it somewhere. One fable was about a bundle of sticks and a farmer whose sons were quarreling and fighting.

There was a fable in two sentences which read, "A coachman, hearing one of the wheels of his coach make a great noise, and perceiving that it was the worst one of the four, asked how it came to take such a liberty. The wheel answered that from the beginning of time, creaking had always been the privilege of the weak." And there were shrewd, brief incidents of foolery such as this: "A waggish, idle fellow in a country town, being desirous of playing a trick on the simplicity of his neighbors and at the same time putting a little money in his pocket at their cost, advertised that he would on a certain day show a wheel carriage that should be so contrived as to go without horses.

By silly curiosity the rustics were taken in, and each succeeding group who came out from the show were ashamed to confess to their neighbors that they had seen nothing but a wheelbarrow."

The style of the Bible, of Aesop's fables, the hearts and minds back of those books, were much in his thoughts. His favorite pages in them he read over and over. Behind such proverbs as "Muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn," and "He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city," there was a music of simple wisdom and a mystery of common everyday life that touched deep spots in him, while out of the fables of the ancient Greek slave he came to see that cats, rats, dogs, horses, plows, hammers, fingers, toes, people, all had fables connected with their lives, characters, places. There was, perhaps, an outside for each thing as it stood alone, while inside of it was its fable.

One book came, titled, "The Life of George Washington, with Curious Anecdotes, Equally Honorable to Himself and Exemplary to His Young Countrymen. Embellished with Six Steel Engravings, by M. L. Weems, formerly Rector of Mt. Vernon Parish." It pictured men of passion and proud ignorance in the government of England driving their country into war on the American colonies. It quoted the far-visioned warning of Chatham to the British parliament, "For God's sake, then, my lords, let the way be instantly opened for reconciliation. I say instantly; or it will be too late forever."

The book told of war, as at Saratoga. "Hoarse as a mastiff of true British breed, Lord Balcarras was heard from rank to rank, loud-animating his troops; while on the other hand, fierce as a hungry Bengal tiger, the impetuous Arnold precipitated heroes on the stubborn foe. Shrill and terrible, from rank to rank, resounds the clash of bayonets—frequent and sad the groans of the dying. Pairs on pairs, Britons and Americans, with each his bayonet at his brother's breast, fall forward together faint-shrieking in death, and mingle their smoking blood." Washington, the man, stood out, as when he wrote, "These things so harassed my heart with grief, that I solemnly declared to God, if I know myself, I would gladly offer myself a sacrifice to the butchering enemy, if I could thereby insure the safety of these my poor distressed countrymen."

The Weems book reached some deep spots in the boy. He asked himself what it meant that men should march, fight, bleed, go cold and hungry for the sake of what they called "freedom."

"Few great men are great in everything," said the book. And there was a cool sap in the passage: "His delight was in that of the manliest sort, which, by stringing the limbs and swelling the muscles, promotes the kindest flow of blood and spirits. At jumping with a long pole, or heaving heavy weights, for his years he hardly had an equal."

Such book talk was a comfort against the same thing over again, day after day, so many mornings the same kind of water from the same spring, the same fried pork and corn-meal to eat, the same drizzles of rain, spring plowing, summer weeds, fall fodder-pulling, each coming every year, with the same tired feeling at the end of the day, so many days alone in the woods

or the fields or else the same people to talk with, people from whom he had learned all they could teach him. Yet there ran through his head the stories and sayings of other people, the stories and sayings of books, the learning his eyes had caught from books; they were a comfort; they were good to have because they were good by themselves; and they were still better to have because they broke the chill of the lonesome feeling.

He was thankful to the writer of Aesop's fables because that writer stood by him and walked with him, an invisible companion, when he pulled fodder or chopped wood. Books lighted lamps in the dark rooms of his gloomy hours. . . . Well—he would live on; maybe the time would come when he would be free from work for a few weeks, or a few months, with books, and then he would read. . . . God, then he would read. . . . Then he would go and get at the proud secrets of his books.

His father—would he be like his father when he grew up? He hoped not. Why should his father knock him off a fence rail when he was asking a neighbor, passing by, a question? Even if it was a smart question, too pert and too quick, it was no way to handle a boy in front of a neighbor. No, he was going to be a man different from his father. The books—his father hated the books. His father talked about "too much eddication"; after readin', writin', 'rithmetic, that was enough, his father said. He, Abe Lincoln, the boy, wanted to know more than the father, Tom Lincoln, wanted to know. Already Abe knew more than his father; he was writing letters for the neighbors; they hunted out the Lincoln farm to get young Abe to find his bottle of ink with blackberry brier root and copperas in it, and his pen made from a turkey buzzard feather, and write letters. Abe had a suspicion sometimes his father was a little proud to have a boy that could write letters, and tell about things in books, and outrun and outwrestle and rough-and-tumble any boy or man in Spencer County. Yes, he would be different from his father; he was already so; it couldn't be helped.

In growing up from boyhood to young manhood, he had survived against lonesome, gnawing monotony and against floods, forest and prairie fires, snake-bites, horse-kicks, ague, chills, fever, malaria, "milk-sick."

A comic outline against the sky he was, hiking along the roads of Spencer and other counties in southern Indiana in those years when he read all the books within a fifty-mile circuit of his home. Stretching up on the long legs that ran from his moccasins to the body frame with its long, gangling arms, covered with linsey-woolsey, then the lean neck that carried the head with its surmounting coonskin cap or straw hat—it was, again, a comic outline—yet with a portent in its shadow. His laughing "Howdy," his yarns and drollery, opened the doors of men's hearts.

Starting along in his eleventh year came spells of abstraction. When he was spoken to, no answer came from him. "He might be a thousand miles away." The roaming, fathoming, searching, questioning operations of the minds and hearts of poets, inventors, beginners who take facts stark, these were at work in him. This was one sort of abstraction he knew; there was another: the blues took him; coils of multiplied melancholies wrapped their blue frustra-

tions inside him, all that Hamlet, Koheleth, Schopenhauer have uttered, in a mesh of foiled hopes. "There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education," he wrote later of that Indiana region. Against these "blues," he found the best warfare was to find people and trade with them his yarns and drolleries. John Baldwin, the blacksmith, with many stories and odd talk and eye-slants, was a help and a light.

Days came when he sank deep in the stream of human life and felt himself kin of all that swam in it, whether the waters were crystal or mud.

He learned how suddenly life can spring a surprise. One day in the woods, as he was sharpening a wedge on a log, the ax glanced, nearly took his thumb off, and left a white scar after healing.

"You never cuss a good ax," was a saying in those timbers.

20

Sixteen-year-old Abe had worked on the farm of James Taylor, at the mouth of Anderson Creek, on that great highway of traffic, the Ohio River. Besides plowing and doing barn and field work, he ran the ferryboat across the Ohio. Two travelers wanted to get on a steamboat one day, and after Abe sculled them to it and lifted their trunks on board they threw him a half-dollar apiece; it gave him a new feeling; the most he had ever earned before that was at butchering for thirty-one cents a day. And when one of the half-dollars slipped from him and sank in the river, that too gave him a new feeling.

At Anderson Creek ferry, he saw and talked with settlers, land buyers and sellers, traders, hunters, peddlers, preachers, gamblers, politicians, teachers, and men shut-mouthed about their business. Occasionally came a customer who looked as if he might be one of the "half-horse, half-alligator men" haunting the Ohio watercourse those years. There was river talk about Mike Fink, known on the Ohio as the "Snapping Turtle" and on the Mississippi as "The Snag," the toughest of the "half-horse, half-alligator" crowd; he was a famous marksman and aiming his rifle from his keel-boat floating the Ohio had shot off the tails of pigs running loose in the bottom lands; once Mike ordered his wife off his barge, covered her with autumn leaves while he threatened to shoot her, set fire to the leaves, so that Mrs. Fink ran with clothes and hair on fire and jumped into the river, to hear her husband saying, "Ye will make eyes at the men on other boats, will ye?"

Along the water-front of Louisville, Mike Fink had backed up his claim, "I can outrun, outhop, outjump, throw down, drag out, and lick any man in the country; I'm a Salt River roarer; I love the wimming and I'm chockfull of fight." They tried him for crimes in Louisville and acquitted him for lack of sufficient evidence; he waved a red bandanna for a good-bye and told them he would come back to face their other indictments.

One of Mike's nicknames was "The Valley King." In a dispute with a man who claimed to have royal blood of France in his veins, Mike closed the argument by kicking the representative of royalty from the inside of a tavern to the middle of a street, with the words, "What if you are a king?"

Ain't we all kings over here?" His keel-boat was named "The Lightfoot." Mike's rival among the "half-horse, half-alligator" men was Little Billy, whose challenge ran, "I'm Little Billy, all the way from North Fork of Muddy Run and I can whip any man in this section of the country. Maybe you never heard of the time the horse kicked me an' put both his hips out o' j'int—if it ain't true, cut me up for catfish bait. I'm one o' the toughest—live forever and then turn to a white-oak post. I can outrun, outjump, outswim, chaw more tobacco and spit less, drink more whisky and keep soberer, than any man in these parts."

Among the bad men of the river, rough-and-tumble fighting included gouging of eyes, thumb-chewing, knee-lifting, head-butting, the biting off of noses and ears, and the tearing loose of underlips with the teeth. "Fights was fights in them days." Travelers had a proverb that a tavern was hardly safe if the proprietor had a nose or an ear off. It was a sign the landlord couldn't take care of himself.

Many travelers carried jugs of whisky, with corncob stoppers. Their common names for the raw article were such as "Red Eye," "Fire Water," "Cider Royal," "Blue Ruin," "Fool Water," "Bug Juice," though there were special brands indicative of lore and lingo with their names, "Clay and Huysen," "Race Horse," "Ching Ching," "Tog," "Rappee," "Fiscal Agent," "T. O. U.," "Tippena Pecco," "Moral Suasion," "Vox Populi," "Ne Plus Ultra," "Shambro," "Pig and Whistle," "Silver Top," "Poor Man's Punco," "Split Ticket," "Deacon," "Exchange," "Stone Wall," "Virginia Fence," "Floater," and "Shifter."

In Louisville, men played billiards all night, and there were no closing hours for the saloons and poker-rooms; a legend ran of one gambler dealing the cards when alarm was sounded that a steamboat at the river landing was on fire, and he went on asking the players, "How many?" as though steamboats caught fire every day. The Hope Distillery Company, capitalized at \$100,000, was operating with grain from the near-by Kentucky and Scioto River valleys, while one Dr. McMurtrie called the Hope concern "a gigantic reservoir of damning drink; they manufacture poison for the human race; of what avail are the reasonings of philanthropists?"

So risky was travel that the Indiana legislature specifically permitted travelers to carry concealed weapons of any kind. There were traders from Cincinnati to New Orleans who were familiar with a regular dialogue, which they rehearsed to each other when they had the same room or bed in a tavern. "Stranger," one would say, "it's been a mighty long time since you and me slep' together." "Yep," came the regulation answer. "Got the same old smell you used to have?" "You *bet*." "Air you as lousy as ever?" "That's me." "Put 'er thar!" Then with a handshake and a swig from the jug they went to their sleep. There were tales of mosquitoes of a certain breed along the Ohio River; two could kill a dog, ten a man.

Men who had made trips up and down the river more than once had a song with a chorus:

Hard upon the beach oar!
She moves too slow.
All the way to Shawneetown,
Long time ago.

A song, "The Hunters of Kentucky," written by Samuel Woodworth, the author of "The Old Oaken Bucket," was heard occasionally amid the Ohio River traffic. It was about the Kentuckians at the Battle of New Orleans; a force of 2,250 of them had marched overland, arriving half-naked; women of New Orleans cut and sewed 1,127 "pairs of pantaloons" for them from wool blankets, in less than five days. Part of the song ran:

And if a daring foe annoys,
No matter what his force is,
We'll show him that Kentucky boys
Are alligator-horses.

After telling about the breastworks erected for the battle, the song had this to say:

Behind it stood our little force,
None wished it to be greater,
For every man was half a horse
And half an alligator.

Lawyers with books in their saddlebags took the ferryboat across the Ohio; law and order was coming to that wild young country, they believed; they could remember only ten years back how the law of the Territory of Indiana provided that a horse-thief should have two hundred lashes with a whip on his bare back and stay in jail till the horse was paid for, and the second time he was caught horse-stealing he was shot or hanged; for stealing cattle or hogs the thief had his shirt taken off and was given thirty-nine lashes.

Hunters crossed Anderson Creek ferry who could tell how George Doty in 1821 up in Johnson County killed 300 deer. They said Noah Major, one of the first settlers in Morgan County, estimated there were 20,000 deer in that county when he came in 1820, six years before. Circuit riders could tell about Peter Cartwright, who twenty years before was riding the Salt River district in Kentucky, occasionally getting over into Indiana; once Cartwright labored with a community of Shakers till eighty-seven of that sect were "rescued from the delusion." Those circuit riders could tell about Samuel Thornton Scott, the Presbyterian wilderness preacher, who swam the White River, losing his hat and one boot, arriving at Vincennes, as one friend said, "neither naked nor clad, barefoot nor shod."

Old-timers came along who could tell how the Indians in 1809 were stealing horses, burning barns and fences, killing settlers, running off with cattle and chickens, and how General Hopkins with 1,200 soldiers burned the Indian villages along the Wabash, their log cabins, gardens, orchards, stationed rangers to hunt down every Indian they found, till the time came when there was not a red man on the Wabash or south of that river in the state of Indiana.

Others could tell of Daniel Ketcham, who was taken by Indians, kept over winter near Madison, loaded like a mule and marched to one of the Miami rivers, where his skin was blacked and he was handed a looking-glass and told to have a last look at himself before burning at the stake. A daughter of the chief, wearing five hundred silver brooches, made a thirty-minute speech, words flying fast and with defiance. Then she let Ketcham loose, two Indian women washed the black off him "and the white blood out"; he was taken to the tent of their mother, who offered him her hand but, being drunk, fell off her seat before he could take the hand. He carried wood, pounded corn, escaped and returned home to his wife, who had pledged neighbors that Ketcham, who was a famous wheat-stacker, would be home in time for stacking that year.

The ferry boy at Anderson Creek watched and listened to this human drift across the Ohio River, the bushwhackers and bad men who called themselves bad, and the others who called themselves good. Civilization went by, boats and tools breaking ways. Steamboats came past in a slow and proud pageantry making their fourteen- to twenty-day passage from New Orleans to Pittsburgh; geography became fact to the boy looking on; the flags on the steamboats were a sign of that long stretch of country the steamboats were crossing. Strings of flatboats passed, loaded with produce, pork, turkeys, chicken, cornmeal, flour, whisky, venison hams, hazel-nuts, skins, furs, ginseng; this was farm produce for trading at river ports to merchants or to plantation owners for feeding slaves. Other trading boats carried furniture, groceries, clothes, kitchenware, plows, wagons, harness; this was from manufacturing centres, consignments to storekeepers and traders. Houseboats, arks, sleds, flatboats with small cabins in which families lived and kept house, floated toward their new homesteads; on these the women were washing, the children playing. The life-flow of a main artery of American civilization, at a vivid line of growth, was a piece of pageantry there at Anderson Creek.

21

Young Abe was out with ax, saw, and draw-knife building himself a light flat-boat at Bates's Landing, a mile and a half down the river from Anderson's Creek. He was eighteen years old, a designer, builder, navigator; he cut down trees, hewed out planks, pegged and cleated together the bottoms and sides of his own boat, wood from end to end.

Pieces of money jingled in his pockets. Passengers paid him for sculling them from Bates's Landing out to steamboats in the middle of the Ohio River.

He studied words and figurations on pieces of money. Thirteen stars stood for the first Thirteen States of the Union. The silver print of an eagle spreading its wings and lifting a fighting head was on the half-dollar. As though the eagle were crying high, important words, above its beak was inscribed "E Pluribus Unum"; this meant the many states should be One, young Abe learned.

Circled with the thirteen stars were the head and bust of a motherly-look-

ing woman. On her forehead was the word "Liberty." Just what did *She* mean?

Waiting for passengers and looking out on the wide Ohio to the drooping trees that dipped their leaves in the water on the farther shore, he could think about money and women and eagles.

A signal came from the opposite shore one day and Lincoln rowed across the river. As he stepped out of his boat two men jumped out of the brush. They took hold of him and said they were going to "duck" him in the river. They were John and Lin Dill, brothers who operated a ferry and claimed Abe had been transporting passengers for hire contrary to the law of Kentucky.

As they sized up Abe's lean husky arms they decided not to throw him in the river. He might be too tough a customer. Then all three went to Squire Samuel Pate, justice of the peace, near Lewisport.

A warrant for the arrest of Abraham Lincoln was sworn out by John T. Dill. And the trial began of the case of "The Commonwealth of Kentucky versus Abraham Lincoln," charged with violation of "An Act Respecting the Establishment of Ferries."

Lincoln testified he had carried passengers from the Indiana shore out to the middle of the river, never taking them to the Kentucky shore. And the Dill brothers, though sore and claiming the defendant Lincoln had wronged them, did not go so far as to testify he had "for reward set any person over a river," in the words of the Kentucky statute.

Squire Pate dismissed the warrant against Lincoln. The disappointed Dills put on their hats and left. Lincoln sat with Squire Pate for a long talk. If a man knows the law about a business he is in, it is a help to him, the Squire told young Abe.

They shook hands and parted friends. Afterwards on days when no passengers were in sight and it was "law day" at Squire Pate's down the river, Abe would scull over and watch the witnesses, the constables, the Squire, the machinery of law, government, justice.

The State of Indiana, he learned, was one thing, and the State of Kentucky, something else. A water line in the middle of a big river ran between them. He could ask: "Who makes state lines? What *are* state lines?"

22

In the year 1825, ox teams and pack horses came through Gentryville carrying people on their way to a place on the Wabash River they called New Harmony. A rich English business man named Robert Owen had paid \$132,000.00 for land and \$50,000.00 for live stock, tools, and merchandise, and had made a speech before the Congress at Washington telling how he and his companions were going to try to find a new way for people to live their lives together, without fighting, cheating, or exploiting each other, where work would be honorable yet there would be time for play and learning; they would share and share alike, each for all and all for each. In January, 1826,

Owen himself, with a party of 30 people came down the Ohio River in what was called the "boatload of knowledge."

More ox wagons and pack horses kept coming past the Gentryville cross-roads; about a thousand people were joined in Owen's scheme at New Harmony on the Wabash. The scheme lighted up Abe Lincoln's heart. His eyes were big and hungry as a hoot-owl's as he told Dennis Hanks, "There's a school and thousands of books there and fellers that know everything in creation." The schooling would have cost him about \$100 a year and he could have worked for his board. But Tom Lincoln had other plans for his son Abe.

Across the next three years the boy grew longer of leg and arm, tougher of bone and sinew, with harder knuckles and joints. James Gentry, with the largest farms in the Pigeon Creek clearings, and a landing on the Ohio River, was looking the big boy over. He believed Abe could take his pork, flour, meal, bacon, potatoes, and produce to trade down the Mississippi River, for cotton, tobacco, and sugar. Young Abe was set to work on a flatboat; he cut the oaks for a double bottom of stout planks, and a deck shelter, two pairs of long oars at bow and stern, a check-post, and a setting pole for steering.

As the snow and ice began to melt, a little before the first frogs started shrilling, in that year of 1828, they loaded the boat and pushed off.

In charge of the boat Mr. Gentry had placed his son Allen, and in charge of Allen he had placed Abe Lincoln, to hold his own against any half-horse, half-alligator bushwhackers who might try to take the boat or loot it, and leave the bones of those they took it from, at Cave-in-Rock on the Illinois shore, or other spots where the skeletons of flatboatmen had been found years after the looters sold the cargo down the river. The honesty of Abe, of course, had been the first point Mr. Gentry considered; and the next point had been whether he could handle the boat in the snags and sand-bars. The two young men pushed off on their trip of a thousand miles to New Orleans, on a wide, winding waterway, where the flatboats were tied up at night to the river-bank, and floated and poled by day amid changing currents, strings of other flatboats, and in the paths of the proud white steamboats.

Whitecaps rose and broke with their foam feathers, a mile, two miles, beyond the limit of eyesight, as fresh winds blew along the Ohio River. Cave-in-Rock was passed on the Illinois shore, with its sign, "Wilson's Liquor Vault and House of Entertainment," with a doorway 25 feet high, 80 feet wide, and back of that entrance a cavern 200 feet deep, a 14-foot chimney leading to an upper room, where one time later were found 60 human skeletons, most of them rivermen lured and trapped by the Wilson gang that camped at Hurricane Island near by.

Timber-covered river bluffs stood up overlooking the river like plowmen resting big shoulders between the plow-handles; twisted dumps and runs of clay banks were like squatters who had lost hope and found rheumatism and malaria; lone pine trees had silhouetted their dry arms of branches on reefs where they dissolved and reappeared in river-mist lights as if they struggled to tell some secret of water and sky before going under.

The nineteen-year-old husky from Indiana found the Mississippi River as

tricky with comic twists as Aesop's fables, as mystical, boding, and promising as the family Bible. Sand-bars, shoals, and islands were scattered along with the look of arithmetic numbers. Sudden rains, shifting winds, meant new handling of oars. A rising roar and rumble of noise might be rough water ahead or some whimsical current tearing through fallen tree-branches at the river side. A black form seems to be floating up-river through a gray drizzle; the coming out of the sun shows it is an island point, standing still; the light and air play tricks with it.

The bends of the river ahead must be watched with ready oars and sweeps or the flatboat naturally heads in to shore. Strong winds crook the course of the boat, sometimes blowing it ashore; one of the crew must hustle off in a rowboat, tie a hawser to a tree or stump, while another man on the big boat has a rope at the check-post; and they slow her down. Warning signals must be given at night, by waving lantern or firewood, to other craft.

So the flatboat, "the broadhorn," went down the Father of Waters, four to six miles an hour, the crew frying their own pork and corn-meal cakes, washing their own shirts, sewing on their own buttons.

Below Baton Rouge, among the sugar plantations known as the "Sugar Coast," they tied up at the plantation of Madame Duquesne one evening, put their boat in order, spoke their good nights to any sweet stars in the sky, and dropped off to sleep. They woke to find seven Negroes on board trying to steal the cargo and kill the crew; the long-armed Indiana husky swung a crab-tree club, knocked them galley-west, chased them into the woods, and came back to the boat and laid a bandanna on a gash over the right eye that left a scar for life as it healed. Then they cut loose the boat and moved down the river.

At New Orleans they traded, sold the rest of their cargo of potatoes, bacon, hams, flour, apples, jeans, in exchange for cotton, tobacco, and sugar, and sold the flatboat for what it would bring as lumber. And they lingered and loitered a few days, seeing New Orleans, before taking steamer north.

On the streets and by-streets of that town, which had floated the flags of French, British, and American dominion, young Abraham Lincoln felt the pulses of a living humanity with far heartbeats in wide, alien circles over the earth: English sailors who sang "Ranzo" and "Boney," "Hangin' Johnny," and "O Fare-you-well, My Bonny Young Girls"; Dutchmen and French in jabber and exclamative; Swedes, Norwegians, and Russians with blond and reddish mustaches and whiskers; Spaniards and Italians with knives and red silk handkerchiefs; New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Rome, Amsterdam, become human facts; it was London those men came from, ejaculating, "'Ow can ye blime me?"

Women in summer weather wearing slippers and boots; creoles with dusks of eyes; quadroons and octoroons with elusive soft voices; streets lined with saloons where men drank with men or chose from the women sipping their French wine or Jamaica rum at tables, sending quiet signals with their eyes or openly slanging the sailors, teamsters, roustabouts, rivermen, timber cruisers, crap-shooters, poker sharps, squatters, horse thieves, poor whites; bets were laid

on steamboat races; talk ran fast about the construction, then going on, of the New Orleans & Pontchartrain Railroad, to be one of the first steam railroads in America and the world; slaves passed handcuffed into gangs headed for cotton fields of one, two, six thousand acres in size; and everywhere was talk about niggers, good and bad niggers, how to rawhide the bad ones with mule whips or bring 'em to N' Orleans and sell 'em; and how you could trust your own children with a good nigger.

As young Abe Lincoln and Allen Gentry made their way back home to the clearings of Pigeon Creek, Indiana, the tall boy had his thoughts. He had crossed half the United States, it seemed, and was back home after three months' vacation with eight dollars a month pay in his pocket and a scar over the right eye.

That year Indiana University was to print its first catalogue, but Abe Lincoln didn't show up among the students who registered. He was between the plow handles or pulling fodder or sinking the ax in trees and brush, and reading between times "Pilgrim's Progress," a history of the United States, the life of Francis Marion, the life of Ben Franklin, and the book he borrowed from Dave Turnham, the constable. The title-page of the book said it contained, "The Revised Laws of Indiana, adopted and enacted by the general assembly at their eighth session. To which are prefixed the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Indiana, and sundry other documents connected with the Political History of the Territory and State of Indiana. Arranged and published by the authority of the General Assembly."

The science of government, theories of law, and schemes of administration spread themselves before the young man's mind as he crept along from page to page, wrestling with those statutes of Indiana and other documents. It was tough plowing through that book, with the satisfaction, however, that he could keep what he earned. Crimes and punishments were listed there, in black and white, fine distinctions between murder and manslaughter, between burglary, robbery, larceny, forgery, trespass, nuisance, fraud; varied circumstances of assault and battery, affray, unlawful assembly, rout and riot; such offenses as rape, arson, kidnapping, mayhem, counterfeiting, adultery, perjury, profane swearing, selling playing cards or obscene books.

Lives of masses of people spread out before him in a panorama as he read the statutes. He read that there are crimes which shall be deemed "infamous," and these are "murder, rape, treason, man stealing, and willful and corrupt perjury"; and any man found guilty of an infamous crime "shall thereafter be rendered incapable of holding any office of honour, trust, or profit, of voting at any election, of serving as a juror, of giving testimony within this state." He read in Section 60 on page 48, "Every person of the age of fourteen years or upwards, who shall profanely curse or damn, or shall profanely swear by the name of God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Ghost, shall be fined not less than one, nor more than three dollars, for each offence." Sharp lines were drawn between murder and manslaughter; a murderer shall be a person "of sound

memory and discretion, who shall unlawfully kill any reasonable creature in being and under the peace of this state, with malice aforethought"; a manslaughterer shall be a person "who without malice, either express or implied, shall unlawfully kill another person, either voluntarily upon a sudden heat, or involuntarily, but in the commission of some unlawful act." It seemed, too, there was a stream of people born or gone wrong, for the state to take care of, the criminals in jails and prisons, the paupers in poorhouses, the insane and feeble-minded in asylums, wives with runaway husbands, and children born out of wedlock.

23

Reading the *Louisville Gazette* which came weekly to Gentryville, working out as chore-boy, field-hand and ferryman, walking a fifty-mile circuit around the home cabin, flatboating down the Ohio and Mississippi, the young man Abraham Lincoln took in many things with his eyes that saw and his ears that heard and remembered. A Virginia planter named Edward Coles had quit Virginia and come down the Ohio River with his slaves, ending his journey in Illinois, where he had deeded a farm to each of his slaves with papers of freedom. The Erie Canal in New York, a big ditch for big boats to run on, was finished; it cost seven and a half million dollars but it connected the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean and it meant that the north ends of Indiana and Illinois, besides other prairie stretches, were going to fill up faster with settlers. The first railroad in the United States, a stub line three miles long, was running iron-wheeled wagons on iron rails at Quincy, Massachusetts. A settlement called Indianapolis had been cleared away. Glass and nails were arriving in southern Indiana now; there used to be none at all ten years back. The famous Frenchman, General LaFayette, came up the Mississippi from New Orleans and visited Kaskaskia, where a reception was held in a mansion with the windows kept open for the benefit of people outside who wanted to have a look in. Sam Patch, who slid down Niagara Falls once, and lived, had slid down the Genesee Falls at Rochester, New York, and was killed.

It was interesting that Henry Clay, the famous congressman and orator from Kentucky, was nicknamed "The Mill Boy of the Slashes," and came from a family of poor farmers and used to ride to mill with a sack of corn. It was interesting to hear a story that Henry Clay's wife was asked by a Boston woman in Washington, "Doesn't it distress you to have Mr. Clay gambling with cards?" and that she answered, "Oh, dear, no! He most always wins."

Fragments of talk and newspaper items came about Daniel Webster, and his Bunker Hill speech at the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill monument, or John Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and a decision in law, but they were far off. There was a sharp-tongued senator from Virginia, John Randolph of Roanoke, who was bitter against John Calhoun, vice president of the United States; and John Randolph one day pointed his finger at Calhoun and said: "Mr. Speaker! I mean Mr. President of the Senate and would-be

President of the United States, which God in His infinite mercy avert." And Randolph during a hot speech would call to a doorkeeper, "Tims, more porter," taking every ten or fifteen minutes a foaming tumbler of malt liquor, drinking two or three quarts during a long speech.

And neither Calhoun nor anybody else interfered with John Randolph when, on the floor of the Senate, he called John Quincy Adams, the President of the United States, "a traitor," or Daniel Webster "a vile slanderer," or Edward Livingston "the most contemptible and degraded of beings, whom no man ought to touch, unless with a pair of tongs." In some stories about famous men there seemed to be a touch of the comic; John Randolph on the Senate floor called Henry Clay a "blackleg"; they fought a duel with pistols; Clay shot Randolph twice in the pantaloons; Randolph shot off his pistol once "accidentally" and once in the air; both sides came through alive and satisfied.

Southern and western congressmen kept dueling pistols in their Washington outfits; some had special pistols inlaid with gold. A Philadelphia gunsmith named Derringer was winning popularity with a short pistol to be carried in the hip pocket and used in street fights. At the "exclusive" assembly balls in Washington, the women's skirts came down to slightly above the ankles; their silk stockings were embroidered with figures called "clocks" and their thin slippers had silk rosettes and tiny silver buckles. The fashionable men of "exclusive" society affairs wore frock coats of blue, green, or claret cloth, with gilt buttons; shirts were of ruffled linen; they had baggy "Cossack" pantaloons tucked into "Hessian" boots with gold top tassels.

Everybody in the capital knew that the justices of the Supreme Court took snuff from their snuffboxes while hearing causes argued; that Henry Clay was moderate about drinking whisky, while Daniel Webster went too far; that Andrew Jackson smoked a corn-cob pipe, and his enemies were free to say Mrs. Jackson too enjoyed her daily pipe. Protests were made to the Government against the transportation of the mails on Sunday; in Philadelphia church people stretched chains fastened with padlocks across the streets to stop the passage of mail-coaches.

The stories drifted west about white men in New York City who held political processions in which they marched dressed like Indians; they had organized the Tammany Society back in 1789; the members died but Tammany lived on. The big excitement of New York politics had been the struggle of De Witt Clinton, the governor, to put through the digging of the Erie Canal, against Tammany opposition.

Oh, a ditch he would dig from the lakes to the sea.
The Eighth of the world's matchless Wonders to be.
Good land! How absurd! But why should you grin?
It will do to bury its mad author in.

So Tammany sang at the start. But De Witt Clinton stuck with the tenacity of his forefathers who had fought against the Indians and against the British king. When he won out, the rhymes ran:

Witt Clinton is dead, St. Tammany said,
And all the papooses with laughter were weeping;
But Clinton arose and confounded his foes—
The cunning old fox had only been sleeping.

There had been the four years John Quincy Adams was President. He had been elected in a three-cornered fight that ended on election day with Andrew Jackson having the most votes cast for him but not a majority. This had put the contest into Congress, where Henry Clay had thrown his forces to Adams; and Adams's first move was to appoint Clay Secretary of State. The Jackson men said it was a crooked deal. Jackson had handed in his resignation as Senator from Tennessee and started work on his political fences for 1828, while his New York Tammany friend, Martin Van Buren, was booming him up North. All the four years Adams was President, the moves in Congress were aimed at bagging the Presidency in 1828. Investigating committees worked overtime; each side dug for the other's scandals: Adams's past personal record; Jackson's handling of six deserters at Mobile in 1815, when 1,500 soldiers were drawn up at parade rest to watch thirty-six riflemen fire at six blindfolded men, each man kneeling on his own coffin; Adams's bills for wall paper and paint in renovating the White House; Jackson's alleged marriage to his wife before she was properly divorced.

In the background of all the bitter personal feelings, the slander and the slack talk of politics, a deep, significant drift and shift was going on. Part of it was the feeling of the West and Southwest, the raw and new country, against the East and New England, the settled and established country. Added to this was a feeling that Jackson stood for the rough, plain people who work, as against the people who don't. That was the issue, as the Jackson crowd presented it, so that even Abe Lincoln in Spencer County, Indiana, was caught in the drive of its enthusiasm, and wrote:

Let auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind;
May Jackson be our President,
And Adams left behind.

Jackson rode to election on a tumultuous landslide of ballots. His wife, Rachel, said, "Well, for Mr. Jackson's sake, I am glad, but for my own part I never wished it." And the home women of Nashville secretly got ready dresses of satin and silk for her to wear in Washington as the first lady of the land; then death took her suddenly; her husband for hours refused to believe she had breathed her last; he had killed one man and silenced others who had spoken against her. One woman wrote, "General Jackson was never quite the same man afterward; her death subdued his spirit and corrected his speech."

Then the new President-elect sailed down the Cumberland River to the Ohio, stopped at Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, and went on to Washington for an inauguration before a crowd of ten thousand people, whose wild cheering of their hero showed they believed something new and different had arrived

in the government of the American republic. Daniel Webster, writing a letter to a friend, hit off the event by saying: "I never saw such a crowd. People have come five hundred miles to see General Jackson, and they really seem to think the country is rescued from some dreadful danger." The buckskin shirts of Kentucky settlers and the moccasins of Indian fighters from Tennessee were seen in the crowd, and along with politicians, preachers, merchants, gamblers, and lookers-on, swarmed in to the White House reception, took their turns at barrels of whisky, broke punch-bowls of glass and china-ware, emptied pails of punch, stood on the satin-covered chairs and had their look at "Andy Jackson, Our President," who was shoved into a corner where a line of friends formed a barrier to protect the sixty-two-year-old man from his young buck henchmen.

Thus began an eight-year period in which Andrew Jackson was President of the United States. He came to the White House with the mud of all America's great rivers and swamps on his boots, with records of victories in battles against savage Indian tribes and trained Continental European generals who had fought Napoleon, with shattered ribs and the bullets of Tennessee duelists and gun-fighters of the Southwest in his body; he knew little grammar and many scars, few classics and many fast horses.

Jackson came taking the place of John Quincy Adams, who was asking large funds for a national university and a colossal astronomical observatory, "a lighthouse of the skies," a lovable, decent man who knew all the capes, peninsulas, and inlets of New England, who had been across the Atlantic and stood by the Thames and the Seine rivers, and had never laid eyes on the Mississippi nor the Wabash River. Harvard went under as against the Smoky Mountains and Horseshoe Bend. Jackson came in with 178 electoral votes as against 83 for Adams, after national circulation by his enemies of a thick pamphlet entitled, "Reminiscences; or an Extract from the Catalogue of General Jackson's Youthful Indiscretions, between the Age of Twenty-Three and Sixty," reciting fourteen fights, duels, brawls, shooting and cutting affairs, in which it was alleged he had killed, slashed, and clawed various American citizens. It was told of him that he asked a friend the day after the inaugural what the people were saying of his first message. "They say it is first-rate, but nobody believes you wrote it," was the answer. To which Jackson rejoined, "Well, don't I deserve just as much credit for picking out the man who could write it?"

One nickname for him was "Old Hickory"; he had lived on acorns and slept in the rain; now he sat in a second-story room of the White House smoking a cob pipe, running the United States Government as he had run his armies, his political campaigns, his Tennessee plantation, his stable of racing horses, with a warm heart, a cool head, a sharp tongue, recklessly, cunningly; he was simple as an ax-handle, shrewd as an Indian ambush, mingling in his breast the paradoxes of the good and evil proverbs of the people.

Jackson was the son of a north-of-Irelander who came to America with only a pair of hands. "No man will ever be quite able to comprehend Andrew Jackson who has not personally known a Scotch-Irishman." His breed broke

with their bare hands into the wilderness beyond the Allegheny Mountains, and more than any other one stock of blood is credited with putting the western and southwestern stretches of territory under the dominion of the central federal government at Washington. The mellowed and practiced philosopher, Thomas Jefferson, once wrote a letter with the passage, "When I was president of the Senate, he (Jackson) was a senator, and he could never speak on account of the rashness of his feelings. I have seen him attempt it repeatedly and as often choke with rage." And yet, unless the Jackson breed of men, even their extreme type, "the half-horse, half-alligator men," had pushed with their covered wagons, their axes and rifles, out into the territory of the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson would have had no basis nor data for his negotiations in that mammoth land deal. Though in the presence of the ruffled linen of the Senate Jackson did "choke with rage," he faced Creek Indians, or seasoned troops from Napoleonic campaigns, or mutineers of his own army, with a cool and controlled behavior that was beyond the range of comprehension of models of etiquette in Washington.

With Jackson in the White House came a new politics, better and worse. The ax of dismissal fell on two thousand postmasters, department heads and clerks. An Administration daily newspaper, the *Washington Globe*, began publication; all officeholders earning more than one thousand dollars a year had to subscribe or lose their jobs. The editor was asked to soften an attack on an Administration enemy, and replied, "No, let it tear his heart out." Wives of Cabinet members refused to mix socially with Peggy O'Neill; talk ran that she was "fast" and of too shady a past even though now married to the Secretary of War. As the scandal dragged on, Jackson wrote hundreds of letters in her defense, sometimes using the phrase that she was "chaste as snow"; the husbands of the offended Cabinet members' wives resigned from the Cabinet; Jackson knocked the ashes from his cob pipe, appointed fresh and willing Cabinet members, and life went on as before.

When his postmaster-general, a tried and loyal friend, rebelled at making the wholesale dismissals required by the politicians, Jackson pushed him to a seat on the Supreme Court bench, and appointed a more willing post-office chief. One friend said he was an actor, that after storming at a caller, and closing the door, he would chuckle over his pipe and say, "He thought I was mad." A mail-coach robber, condemned to be hanged, reminded the President that once at a horse-race near Nashville he had told General Jackson to change his bets from a horse whose jockey had been "fixed" to lose the race; the death sentence was commuted to ten years in prison. "Ask nothing but what is right, submit to nothing wrong," was his advice on policies with European countries. He was well thought of by millions who believed there was truth lurking behind his sentiment, "True virtue cannot exist where pomp and parade are the governing passions; it can only dwell with the people—the great laboring and producing classes that form the bone and sinew of our confederacy." He was alluded to as "the Tennessee Barbarian" or "King Andrew the First" in certain circles, yet the doormats of the White House got ac-

quainted with the shoes, boots, and moccasins of a wider range of humanity as he ran the Federal Government during those first years of the eight in which he was to be President.

24

All the way down the Mississippi to the Gulf and back, Abe Lincoln had heard about Andrew Jackson in that year of 1828 when Jackson swept that country with a big landslide. In the newspapers that came to the post office at Gentryville, in the talk around Jones's store, in the fields harvesting, and at meetings, Andrew Jackson was the man talked about. With Andrew Jackson for President, the plainest kind of people could go into the White House and feel at home; with that kind of man, who smoked a cob pipe, talked horse sense, and rode reckless horses, and who had whipped the British at New Orleans, the Government would be more like what was meant in the Declaration of Independence and the Fourth of July speeches. Thus the talk ran.

Young Abe Lincoln heard it. The personality and the ways of Andrew Jackson filled his thoughts. He asked himself many questions and puzzled his head about the magic of this one strong, stormy man filling the history of that year, commanding a wild love from many people, and calling out curses and disgust from others, but those others were very few in Indiana. The riddles that attach to a towering and magnetic personality staged before a great public, with no very definite issues or policies in question, but with some important theory of government and art of life apparently involved behind the personality—these met young Abe's eyes and ears.

It was the year he wrote in the front cover of "The Columbian Class Book" the inscription, "Abe Lincoln 1828." The preface of the book said it contained "pieces calculated to interest the attention of the scholar and impress the mind with a knowledge of useful facts." And he borrowed from Josiah Crawford "The Kentucky Preceptor," the preface of that book saying, "Tales of love, or romantic fiction, or anything which might tend to instil false notions into the minds of children have not gained admission." There were essays on Magnanimity, Remorse of Conscience, Columbus, Demosthenes, On the Scriptures as a Rule of Life, the speech of Robert Emmet on why the English government should not hang an Irish patriot, stories of Indians, and the inaugural address of President Jefferson twenty-four years previous to that year. Jefferson spoke of "the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty" in the French Revolution. Let America remember that free speech, and respect for the opinions of others, are measures of safety, was the advice of Jefferson.

Then Abe Lincoln read the passage from the pen of Jefferson: "If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union, or to change its republican form, let them stand as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men fear a republican government cannot be strong, that this

government is not strong enough. . . . I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth."

Young nineteen-year-old Abe Lincoln had plenty to think about in that year of 1828, what with his long trip to New Orleans and back, what with the strong, stormy Andrew Jackson sweeping into control of the Government at Washington, and the gentle, teasing, thoughtful words of Thomas Jefferson: "Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others?"

25

For more than twenty years Johnny Appleseed had been making his name one to laugh at and love in the log cabins between the Ohio River and the northern lakes. In 1806, he loaded two canoes with apple seeds at cider mills in western Pennsylvania and floated down the Ohio River to the Muskingum, along which he curved to White Woman Creek, the Mohican, the Black Fork, making a long stay on the borders of Licking Creek and in Licking County, where many farmers were already thanking him for their orchards. As he ran out of seeds he rode a bony horse or walked back to western Pennsylvania to fill two leather bags with apple seeds at cider-mills; then in the Ohio territory where he tramped, he would pick out loamy land, plant the seeds, pile brush around, and tell the farmers to help themselves from the young shoots. He went barefoot till winter came, and was often seen in late November walking in mud and snow. Neither snakes, Indians nor foreign enemies had harmed him. Children had seen him stick pins and needles into his tough flesh; when he sat at a table with a farmer family he wouldn't eat till he was sure there was plenty for the children. Asked if he wasn't afraid of snakes as he walked barefoot in the brush, he pulled a New Testament from his pocket and said, "This book is protection against all danger here and hereafter." When taken in overnight by a farmer, he would ask if they wanted to hear "some news right fresh from heaven," and then stretch out on the floor and read, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" and other Beatitudes. A woman said of his voice that it was "loud as the roar of wind and waves, then soft and soothing as the balmy airs that quivered the morning-glory leaves about his gray beard."

Once the camp-fire of Johnny Appleseed drew many mosquitoes which were burning; he quenched the fire, explaining to friends, "God forbid that I should build a fire for my comfort which should be the means of destroying any of His creatures!" During most of the year he wore no clothes except for a coffee sack with armholes cut in it; and a stump preacher once near the village of Mansfield was crying, "Where now is there a man who, like the primitive Christians, is traveling to Heaven barefooted and clad in coarse raiment?" when Johnny Appleseed came forward to put a bare foot on the pulpit stump and declare, "Here's your primitive Christian." A hornet stung him and he plucked out the hornet from a wrinkle of the coffee sack and let it go free. He claimed that his religion brought him into conversations with angels; two

of the angels with whom he talked were to be his wives in heaven provided he never married on earth. What little money he needed came from farmers willing to pay for young apple trees. As settlements and villages came thicker, he moved west with the frontier, planting apple seeds, leaving trails of orchards in his paths over a territory of a hundred thousand square miles in Ohio and Indiana.

These were the years John James Audubon, who had kept a store in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, was traveling the Ohio and Mississippi River regions, with knapsack, dog, and gun, hunting birds, to paint them in oil on canvas "with their own lively animated ways when seeking their natural food and pleasure." He was among pioneers who moved from Kentucky and settled at Princeton, Indiana, a walker who walked on thousand-mile trips, leaving his wife to stay with friends while he lived with wild birds and shot them and sketched their forms.

Audubon's notebook told of canoeing in flood-swollen Mississippi river-bottom lands. "All is silent and melancholy, unless when the mournful bleating of the hemmed-in deer reaches your ear, or the dismal scream of an eagle or a heron is heard, or the foul bird rises, disturbed by your approach, from the carcass on which it was allaying its craving appetite. Bears, cougars, lynxes, and all other quadrupeds that can ascend the trees, are observed crouched among their top branches; hungry in the midst of abundance, although they see floating around them the animals on which they usually prey. They dare not venture to swim to them. Fatigued by the exertions which they have made in reaching dry land, they will there stand near the hunter's fire, as if to die by a ball were better than to perish amid the waste of waters. On occasions like this, all these animals are shot by hundreds."

Audubon went East to Philadelphia in 1824, gave an exhibition of his paintings, sold less than enough to pay for the show, and was told not to publish his work. In 1827 he began his issues of a work titled "The Birds of America," which when finished was in eighty-seven parts. That same year he reached London, where a barber cut off the ringlets of hair falling to his shoulders, and he wrote, under date of March 19, 1827, "This day my hair was sacrificed, and the will of God usurped by the wishes of Man. My heart sank low." He became an international authority, and sat up till half-past three one morning writing a paper to be read the next day before the Natural History Society of London on the habits of the wild pigeon. "So absorbed was my whole soul and spirit in the work, that I felt as if I were in the woods of America among the pigeons, and my ears filled with the sound of their rustling wings."

After reading his paper before the society, Audubon wrote the commentary: "Captain Hall expressed some doubts as to my views respecting the affection and love of pigeons, as if I made it human, and raised the possessors quite above the brutes. I presume the love of the (pigeon) mothers for their young is much the same as the love of woman for her offspring. There is but one kind of love: God is love, and all his creatures derive theirs from his; only it is modified by the different degrees of intelligence in different beings and creatures."

Thus Audubon, who had sold Sunday clothes to his customers in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. He and Abe Lincoln had footed the same red clay highways of Hardin County, floated the same Ohio and Mississippi rivers, fought in the night against other forms of life that came to kill. Both loved birds and people. Each was a child of hope.

26

In the fall of 1829, Abraham Lincoln was putting his ax to big trees and whipsawing logs into planks for lumber to build a house on his father's farm. But his father made new plans; the lumber was sold to Josiah Crawford; and the obedient young axman was put to work cutting and sawing trees big enough around to make wagon-wheels, and hickories tough enough for axles and poles on an ox-wagon.

The new plans were that the Lincoln family and the families of Dennis Hanks and Levi Hall, married to Abe's step-sisters, thirteen people in all, were going to move to Macon County over in Illinois, into a country with a river the Indians named Sangamo, meaning "the land of plenty to eat." The Lincoln farm wasn't paying well; after buying eighty acres for \$2.00 an acre and improving it for fourteen years, Tom Lincoln sold it to Charles Grigsby for \$125.00 cash before signing the papers.

The milk-sick was taking farm animals; since Dennis Hanks lost four milk-cows and eleven calves in one week, besides having a spell of the sickness himself, Dennis was saying, "I'm goin' t' git out o' here and hunt a country where the milk-sick is not; it's like to ruined me."

In September Tom Lincoln and his wife had made a trip down to Elizabethtown, Kentucky, where they sold for \$123.00 the lot which Mrs. Lincoln had fallen heir to when her first husband died; the clerk, Samuel Haycraft, filled out the deed of sale, declaring that she "was examined by me privately and apart from her said husband" and did "freely and willingly subscribe to the sale." And Tom, with the cash from this sale and the money from the sale of his own farm, was buying oxen, or young steers, and trading and selling off household goods.

Moving was natural to his blood; he came from a long line of movers; he could tell about the family that had moved so often that their chickens knew the signs of another moving; and the chickens would walk up to the mover, stretch flat on the ground, and put up their feet to be tied for the next wagon trip.

The men-folks that winter, using their broadaxes and draw-knives on solid blocks of wood, shaping wagon wheels, had a church scandal to talk about. Tom Lincoln and his wife had been granted by the Pigeon church a "letter of Dismission," to show they had kept up their obligations and were regular members. Sister Nancy Grigsby had then come in with a "protest" that she was "not satisfied with Brother and Sister Lincoln." The trustees took back the letter, investigated, gave the letter again to Brother and Sister Lincoln, and to show how they felt about it, they appointed Brother Lincoln on a com-

mittee to straighten out a squabble between Sister Nancy Grigsby and Sister Betsy Crawford. And it was jotted down in the Pigeon church records and approved by the trustees.

The ox wagon they made that winter was wood all through, pegs, cleats, hickory withes, and knots of bark, holding it together, except the wheel rims, which were iron. Bundles of bedclothes, skillets, ovens, and a few pieces of furniture were loaded, stuck, filled and tied onto the wagon; early one morning the last of the packing was done. It was February 15, 1830; Abraham Lincoln had been four days a full-grown man, a citizen who "had reached his majority"; he could vote at elections from now on; he was lawfully free from his father's commands; he could come and go now; he was footloose.

At Jones' store he had laid in a little stock of pins, needles, buttons, tinware, suspenders, and knickknacks, to peddle on the way to Illinois.

And he had gone for a final look at the winter dry grass, the ruins of last year's wild vine and dogwood over the grave of Nancy Hanks. He and his father were leaving their Indiana home that day; almost naked they had come, stayed fourteen years, toiled, buried their dead, built a church, toiled on; and now they were leaving, almost naked. Now, with the women and children lifted on top of the wagon-load, the men walked alongside, curling and cracking their whip-lashes over the horns or into the hides of the half-broken young steers.

And so the seven-yoke team of young steers, each with his head in a massive collar of hardwood, lashed and bawled at with "Gee," "Haw," "G' lang" and "Hi thar, you! Git up!" hauled the lumbering pioneer load from the yellow and red clay of Spencer County, in Southern Indiana, to the black loam of the prairie lands in Macon County, Illinois.

They had crossed the Wabash River, the state line of Illinois, and the Sangamo River, on a two-week trip with the ground freezing at night and thawing during the day, the steers slipping and tugging, the wagon axles groaning, the pegs and cleats squeaking. A dog was left behind one morning as the wagon crossed a stream; it whined, ran back and forth, but wouldn't jump in and swim across; young Lincoln took off boots and socks, waded into the icy water, gathered the hound in his arms and carried it over.

Near the Indiana-Illinois state line, Lincoln took his pack of needles and notions and walked up to a small farmhouse that seemed to him to be "full of nothing but children." They were of assorted sizes, seventeen months to seventeen years in age, and all in tears. The mother, red-headed and red-faced, clutched a whip in her fingers. The father, meek, mild, tow-headed, stood in the front doorway as if waiting for his turn to feel the thongs. Lincoln thought there wouldn't be much use in asking the woman if she wanted any needles and notions; she was busy, with a keen eye on the children and an occasional glance at her man in the doorway.

She saw Lincoln come up the path, stepped toward the door, pushed her husband out of the way, and asked Lincoln what was his business. "Nothing, madam," he answered gently, "I merely dropped in as I came along to see how things were going." He waited a moment.

"Well, you needn't wait," the woman snapped out. "There's trouble here, and lots of it, too, but I kin manage my own affairs without the help of outsiders. This is jest a family row, but I'll teach these brats their places ef I have to lick the hide off every one of 'em. I don't do much talkin' but I run this house, so I don't want no one sneakin' round tryin' to find out how I do it, either."

Around them as they crossed the first stretch of the Grand Prairie was a land and soil different from Indiana or Kentucky. There were long levels, running without slopes up or hollows down, straight to the horizon; arches and domes of sky covered it; the sky counted for more, seemed to have another language and way of talk, farther silences, too, than east and south where the new settlers had come from. Grass stood up six and eight feet; men and horses and cattle were lost to sight in it; so tough were the grass-roots that timber could not get rootholds in it; the grass seemed to be saying to the trees, "You shall not cross"; turf and sky had a new way of saying, "We are here—who are you?" to the ox-wagon gang hunting a new home.

Buffalo paths, deer tracks, were seen; coon, possum, and wolf signs were seen or heard. And they met settlers telling how the sod was so tough it had broken many a plow; but after the first year of sod-corn, the yield would run 50 bushels to the acre; wheat would average 25 to 30 bushels, rye the same, oats 40 to 60 bushels; Irish potatoes, timothy hay, and all the garden vegetables tried so far would grow. Horses and cattle, lean from short fodder through the winter, would fatten and shine with a gloss on their hair when turned loose in the wild grass in spring. Beds of wild strawberries came ripe in June and stained horses and cattle crimson to the knees. Wild horses and wild hogs were still to be found.

The outfit from Indiana raised a laugh as they drove their steers and wagon into the main street of Decatur, a county-seat settlement where court would hold its first session the coming May. To the question, "Kin ye tell us where John Hanks' place is?" the Decatur citizens told them how to drive four miles, where they found John, talked over old Indiana and Kentucky times, but more about Illinois. After the night stay, John took the Lincoln family six miles down the Sangamo River, where he had cut the logs for their cabin. There young Lincoln helped raise the cabin, put in the crops, split rails for fences. He hired out to Major Warnick near by, read the few books in the house, and passed such pleasant talk and smiles with the major's daughter, Mary, and with another girl, Jemima Hill, that at a later time neighbors said he carried on courtships, even though both girls married inside of a year after young Lincoln kept company in those parts. He was asking himself when he would get married, if ever.

He wrote back to Jones at Gentryville that he doubled his money on the peddler's stock he sold; he earned a pair of brown jean trousers by splitting four hundred rails for each yard of the cloth. With new outlooks came new thoughts; at Vincennes, on the way to Illinois, he had seen a printing-press for the first time, and a juggler who did sleight-of-hand tricks. John Hanks put him on a box to answer the speech of a man who was against improve-

ments of the Sangamo River; and John told neighbors, "Abe beat him to death." More and more he was delivering speeches, to trees, stumps, potato rows, just practicing, by himself.

Fall came, with miasma rising from the prairie, and chills, fever, ague, for Tom Lincoln and Sally Bush, and many doses of "Barks," a Peruvian bark and whisky tonic mixture, bought at Renshaw's general store in Decatur. Then came Indian summer, and soft weather, till Christmas week. And then a snow-storm.

For forty-eight hours, with no let-up, the battalions of a blizzard filled the sky, and piled a cover two and a half feet deep on the ground. No sooner was this packed down and frozen than another drive of snow came till there was a four-foot depth of it on the level. It was easy picking for the light-footed wolves who could run on the top crust and take their way with cattle. Wheat crops went to ruin; cows, hogs, horses died in the fields. Connections between houses, settlements, grain mills, broke down; for days families were cut off, living on parched corn; some died of cold, lacking wood to burn; some died of hunger lacking corn.

Those who came through alive, in the years after, called themselves "Snow-birds." The Lincoln family had hard days. It was hard on new settlers with no reserve stocks of meat, corn, and wood; young Lincoln made a try at wading through to the Warnick house four miles off, nearly froze his feet, and was laid up at home.

As the winter eased off, the Lincoln family moved southeast a hundred miles to Goose Nest Prairie, in the southern part of Coles County.

27

Eight miles from the new farm was the town of Charleston. Young Lincoln drove there with an ox team and sold loads of cordwood split with his own ax. One afternoon he was late in selling his wood and decided with dark coming on he wouldn't try to drive his ox team to the farm. Tarlton Miles, the horse doctor, living just outside of Charleston, took him in overnight, and they sat up till midnight talking.

In the morning, Lincoln goaded his steers on out to the farm, drove wedges with a maul, split more cordwood. In the evening, as he lay on a board reading, a stranger came to the house and asked to stay overnight. Tom Lincoln said there were only two beds, one belonged to his son, and it depended on whether his son wanted to sleep with a stranger. The two shared the bed that night. . . . It was a country where the veterinary surgeon took in the ox-driver and the ox-driver took in the stranger.

Over in Cumberland County, which joined Coles, the champion wrestler was Dan Needham. It came to his ears several times that the new tall boy over at Goose Nest could throw him. "I can fling him three best out of four any day," was Needham's answer. At a house-raising at Wabash Point the two faced each other, each one standing six feet, four inches, each a prairie panther. "Abe, rattle 'im," said Tom Lincoln.

Abe held off; the crowd egged both of them on. They grappled four times and each time Needham went under. Then Needham lost his head, threatened a fist fight, calmed down with hearing Lincoln's drawling banter, and at last put out his hand with a grin and said, "Well, I'll be damned." And they shook hands.

In February, 1831, there came to the neighborhood of John Hanks, when Abe Lincoln was lingering there, a man named Denton Offut, a hard drinker, a hustler, and a talker shrewd with his tongue, easy with promises, a believer in pots of gold at the rainbow end. He would have a flatboat and cargo to go to New Orleans, all ready for Abe Lincoln, John Hanks, and John Johnston, "as soon as the snow should go off," if they would meet him on a Sangamo River branch near the village of Springfield. They were there at the time set but Denton Offut wasn't; they walked to Springfield, asked for Offut, found him drunk at the Buckhorn Tavern, and helped sober him.

Offut hired them at twelve dollars a month, gave them permission to go onto Government timber-land and get out gunwales for the flatboat, while the rest of the needed lumber could come from Kirkpatrick's sawmill, charged to Offut. They slung together a camp outfit and started building, with Lincoln calling himself "chief cook and bottle-washer." A sleight-of-hand performer came along and giving his show asked for an empty hat to take eggs out of. Lincoln offered his hat in a hesitating way, saying he hesitated not so much out of respect for the hat as for the eggs.

Two men, whose canoe turned over and got away from them, were shivering in a tree on a raw April day with the freshet-flooded Sangamo River under them. Lincoln got out across the rampaging waters to the tree, on a log with a rope tied to it; the men in the tree straddled the log and were pulled on shore. People began talking about Lincoln's cool wit.

Thirty days saw the flatboat finished, loaded, and on her way, with Lincoln on deck in blue homespun jeans, jacket, vest, rawhide boots with pantaloons stuffed in, and a felt hat once black but now, as the owner said, "sunburned till it was a combine of colors." On April 19, rounding the curve of the Sangamo at the village of New Salem, the boat stuck on the Cameron mill-dam, and hung with one third of her slanted downward over the edge of the dam and filling slowly with water, while the cargo of pork-barrels were sliding slowly so as to overweight one end.

She hung there a day while all the people of New Salem came down to look at the river disaster, which Lincoln fixed by unloading the pork barrels into another boat, boring a hole in the end of the flatboat as it hung over the dam, letting the water out, dropping the boat over the dam and reloading. As she headed toward the Mississippi watercourse, New Salem talked about the cool head and ready wit of the long-shanked young man with his pantaloons stuffed in his rawhide boots.

Again Lincoln floated down the Mississippi River, four to six miles an hour, meeting strings of other flatboats, keel-boats, arks, sleds, proud white steam-boats flying flags. Stepping off their flatboat at New Orleans, Lincoln and Hanks went nearly a mile, walking on flatboats, to reach shore. Stacks of pork

and flour from the West, and piles of cotton bales from the South, stood on the wharves. Some shippers, about one in six, were cursing their luck; on the long haul from north of the Ohio River their pork and flour had spoiled; all they got for their trip was the view of the Mississippi River scenery. In New Orleans, Lincoln saw advertisements of traders offering to "pay the highest prices in cash for good and likely Negroes" or to "attend to the sale and purchase of Negroes on commission." A firm advertised: "We have now on hand, and intend to keep throughout the entire year, a large and well-selected stock of Negroes, consisting of field hands, house servants, mechanics, cooks, seamstresses, washers, ironers, etc., which we can sell and will sell as low or lower than any other house here or in New Orleans; persons wishing to purchase would do well to call on us before making purchases elsewhere, as our fresh and regular arrivals will keep us supplied with a good and general assortment; our terms are liberal; give us a call."

One trader gave notice: "I will at all times pay the highest cash prices for Negroes of every description, and will also attend to the sale of Negroes on commission, having a jail and yard fitted up expressly for boarding them." Another announced: "The undersigned would respectfully state to the public that he has forty-five Negroes now on hand, having this day received a lot of twenty-five direct from Virginia, two or three good cooks, a carriage driver, a good house boy, a fiddler, a fine seamstress, and a likely lot of field men and women; all of whom he will sell at a small profit; he wishes to close out and go on to Virginia after a lot for the fall trade." There were sellers advertising, "For sale—several likely girls from 10 to 18 years old, a woman 24, a very valuable woman 25, with three very likely children," while buyers indicated wants after the manner of one advertising, "Wanted—I want to purchase twenty-five likely Negroes, between the ages of 18 and 25 years, male and female, for which I will pay the highest prices in cash."

An Alabama planter advertised, "Runaway—Alfred, a bright mulatto boy, working on plantation; about 18 years old, pretty well grown, has blue eyes, light flaxen hair, skin disposed to freckle; he will try to pass as free-born." Another Alabama planter gave notice: "One hundred dollars reward for return of a bright mulatto man slave, named Sam; light sandy hair, blue eyes, ruddy complexion, is so white as very easily to pass for a free white man."

Lincoln saw one auction in New Orleans where an octoroon girl was sold, after being pinched, trotted up and down, and handled so the buyer could be satisfied she was sound of wind and limb. After a month's stay he worked his passage, firing a steamboat furnace, up the Mississippi River, stayed a few weeks on his father's farm in Coles County, Illinois, and then spoke the long good-bye to home and the family roof.

Saying good-bye to his father was easy, but it was not so easy to hug the mother, Sally Bush, and put his long arms around her, and lay his cheeks next to hers and say he was going out into the big world to make a place for himself.

The father laughed his good-bye, and not so long after told a visitor: "I s'pose Abe is still fooling hisself with eddication. I tried to stop it, but he has

got that fool idea in his head, and it can't be got out. Now I hain't got no eddication, but I get along far better'n ef I had. Take bookkeepin'—why, I'm the best bookkeeper in the world! Look up at that rafter thar. Thar's three straight lines made with a firebrand: ef I sell a peck of meal I draw a black line across, and when they pay, I take a dishcloth and jest rub it out; and that thar's a heap better'n yer eddication." And the visitor who heard this told friends that Thomas Lincoln was "one of the shrewdest ignorant men" he had ever seen.

With his few belongings wrapped in a handkerchief bundle tied to a stick over his shoulder, Abraham was on his way to New Salem.

28

Abraham Lincoln, in the spring of the year 1831, is spending a night at the cabin of John Hanks, planning his canoe trip down the Sangamo River to New Salem, where he is going to work on his new job in the store of Denton Offut.

Spring breezes move in the oaks and poplars. The branches of the trees register their forks and angles in flat black shadows over the white flat spread of moonsilver on the ground.

For a moment there flits through his head the memory of the face of an auburn-haired girl, a head with corn-silk hair; he had seen her at New Salem; he would see her again there.

And as Abraham Lincoln stepped out of the cabin door of the Hanks home that night in 1831, he might have looked up and asked the moon to tell him about the comings and goings of men and machines, guns and tools, events and enterprises, the drift of human struggle and history, over and around the earth.

And the moon might have told him many things that spring night in the year 1831.

The ships and guns of the white men of western Europe were beginning to travel world routes. A vast interwoven fabric of international selling, buying, manufacturing, merchandising, with its circles of operation around the earth, was starting to develop. Coal and iron, steam and steel, and new ways to use them, had been found. In Lancashire and West Riding, England, and in Lyons, France, were new cities with miles of smokestacks sending their scrolls of soot against the sky; under them were roaring power-driven looms, the rattling and clicking spindles and bobbins of machines weaving cloth from American cotton, from Australian wool. The machines had knuckles and fingers weaving faster than any man or woman ever had woven by hand; a boy or a woman watching a machine did the work ten men or twenty used to do. And the ships and guns of England, France, the Netherlands, had gone out over the earth and found millions of new customers for the cloths, fabrics, prints, from these factories, where "the iron man" did the heavy work, the

iron man who neither ate nor drank nor slept nor revolted nor took strong drink and came late to work.

The human swarms of India, Asia Minor, Egypt, of Tripoli, Tunis, and Algeria, were on the routes of British, French, and Dutch ships that unloaded the factory goods and took on food products and raw materials to bring to their home countries. The British dominions in America, Australia, New Zealand, were on the regular pathways of the British merchant ships. The bayonets of France in Algiers had established dependable business relations. At the straits of the Dardanelles, Mohammedan and Christian soldiers had been fighting till the waters of the Black Sea and the straits of Constantinople and the Dardanelles were opened for the international navigation of all merchant ships. Governments were learning to speak of protectorates, suzerainties, spheres of influence, zones of understanding.

A new form of world civilization was shaping, founded on the production of merchandise by power-driven machinery and the selling and trading of that merchandise in markets as far off as cargoes could be carried by sailing vessels—and by the new incoming steamboats. Merchants, manufacturers, and bankers could now operate with the earth as their region of action. This was the large fact of history before which it seemed all other facts bent and crumpled. Old sleeping, mysterious dynasties of Asia gave way before it and let open their arabesque portals, at the request or bidding of diplomats, salesmen, or the demands of fleets and squadrons.

Yet it was happening that the millions of new customers for the factory-made goods of Europe were not able to buy all that the new power-driven looms and spindles could turn out. Factories shut their doors and turned workmen out. And one day in Lancashire an army of men out of work broke into the factories and smashed a thousand looms. In Paris a tailor had invented a chain-stitch sewing-machine worked with a treadle, and workmen who hated labor-saving machines had wrecked a new factory with eighty of these sewing-machines in it. At Lyons, France, workmen out of jobs rioted with banners inscribed, "Live working or die fighting." In Germany the rulers were in fear of university students who had organized societies and were taking the word "Liberty" for a password. When a student killed a royal spy named Kotzebue, he was put to death, and in Prussia there were 203 students arrested and 94 condemned to death. In middle and eastern Europe was agitation for the serfs to be set free. One French king was told of as the last to die decently in bed as a sovereign; he pointed at the bed and said the next king of France would not die in that bed. Neither dying nor living was a safe and comfortable thing for the kings of Europe amid the rapid zigzag of events.

Thomas Babington Macaulay of the House of Commons in England delivered a warning that the king and the nobles of France had not come back to stay; they were only "playing at despotism." He urged: "The old laws are forgotten. The old titles have become laughing-stocks. To those gay and elegant nobles who studied military science as a fashionable accomplishment, and expected military rank as a part of their birthright, have succeeded men born in lofts and cellars; educated in the half-naked ranks of the revolutionary

armies, and raised by ferocious valor and self-taught skill, to dignities with which the coarseness of their manners and language forms a grotesque contrast. The Bastille is fallen, and can never more rise from its ruins. Is this a romance? Has the warning been given in vain? Have they forgotten how the tender and delicate woman—the woman who would not set her foot on the earth for tenderness and delicateness, the idol of gilded drawing-rooms, the pole-star of crowded theatres, the standard of beauty, the arbitress of fashion, the patroness of genius—was compelled to exchange her luxurious and dignified ease for labor and dependence; perhaps even to draw an infamous and miserable subsistence from those charms which had been the glory of royal circles—to sell for a morsel of bread her reluctant caresses and her haggard smiles—to be turned over from a garret to a hospital and from a hospital to a parish vault? Have they forgotten all this?”

Since 1815, Macaulay declared, the history of England had been “almost entirely made up of the struggles of the lower orders against the government, and of the efforts of the government to keep them down.” In bitterness of sarcasm and irony, he mocked: “The people are distressed and tumultuous. They must be kept down by force. The army must be increased; and the taxes must be increased. Then the distress and tumult are increased; and then the army must be increased again! The country will be governed as a child is governed by an ill-tempered nurse—first beaten *till* it cries, and then beaten *because* it cries!”

And with a sincere analysis that contained no hint of irony nor sarcasm, Sir Robert Peel told Parliament: “The United States has been rapidly undergoing a change from a republic to a mere democracy. The influence of the executive—the influence of the government—has been daily becoming less, and more power has consequently been vested in the hands of the people. And yet, in that country, there is land uncultivated to an extent almost incalculable—there is no established church, no privileged orders—property exists on a very different tenure from that on which it is held in this country; therefore let not the people of England be deceived, let them not imagine from the example of the United States, that because democracy has succeeded and triumphed there, it will also succeed and triumph here.”

Such were a few of the drifts of thought and action at work in Europe in the year 1831 and years just before. Thus ran the ferment and stew of human conditions that made sections of the people of Europe so restless that they looked to see where else over the earth they could go. There was an appeal to them in “land uncultivated to an extent almost incalculable,” land at \$1.25 an acre, in “no established church, no privileged orders,” and in “property on a different tenure.” That appeal would hold across several decades, sending millions in the long suffocating voyage across the ocean to make their gamble in the new country. In the history of America across coming decades, that never-ending stream of newcomers to its soil would be a factor in the ever westward moving of frontiers, in the structure of railroads, cities, armies.

As the ships from Europe came into American ports the ten years following the year 1831, they would deliver 600,000 emigrants, four times as many as

in the preceding ten years. Factory and farm jobs, railroad and canal construction jobs called them, work in lumber woods, brickyards, dockyards; the first words they learned were "job," "work," "boss," "dollars," "cents," "eat," "sleep." Railroads were to be built; wooden rails covered with iron strips, then iron ways. Thousands of Irishmen hired out with pick, shovel and wheelbarrow. R. W. Emerson wrote in his journal, "The poor Irishman, the wheelbarrow is his country." On the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes route to the north, on the wagon roads to Pittsburgh and the Ohio River route to the south, the human traffic was thicker and heavier, as well as on the newer Cumberland road between the two older routes. There were now about 10,000,000 white people in the United States, and about 2,300,000 colored slaves.

The people lived in three sections or regions, each section with a character of its own in products, land, and people. There was the North with a long belt of factories, shops, and mills running from southern Maine to Chesapeake Bay. There was the South with its cotton, tobacco, rice, and slaves. There was the West with its corn, wheat, pork, furs. In some respects these sections or regions were three separate countries, with different ways of looking at life; their soil, climate, slang, and subtleties of personal communication were different.

And behind that tissue of time called the Future, events were operating, shaping lines of destiny for these three sections or regions of America. First of these events was the coming of the railway. An American-made, horizontal-boiler engine was running on the first stub line called the Baltimore & Ohio Railway. Processes for smelting iron with anthracite coal by use of a hot-air blast were almost ready. The transportation revolution was breaking. Blunt facts stood up: iron production jumped from 54,000 tons in 1810 to 165,000 tons in 1830 and would go to 347,000 tons in 1840. Beyond the little narrow Atlantic states, where the dinky B. & O. engines puffed along fifteen miles an hour and slipped on the uphill drag, there were the Great Plains, where miles were measured by thousands, vast level stretches of territory where the building and running of railroads would be easier and faster than anywhere else in the world.

McCormick, Hussey, and other men were fixing their wits on the making of harvesting machines, so that one farmer alone on a mower would cut as much grain as a gang of field hands with scythe and cradle. Morse was nearly ready to connect the Mississippi Valley with the Atlantic seaboard by instantaneous wire communication. Electricity was to be moved from the laboratory to the workshop and have its horsepower measured and harnessed. These were events sleeping behind that tissue of time called the Future, almost ready to step out into the drama called History.

The South, in the early thirties, was an empire of cotton blossoms, and cotton bales, held in the loose leashes of cotton planters who lived on horseback accustomed to command. The old-time tobacco and rice planters had closed their silver snuff-boxes, spoken muffled farewells to the power they once held, and acknowledged some new and terrible chapter was in the writing for the

South. In some counties in Virginia, half the population had been swept out and away downward into the Cotton Belt; John Randolph said publicly his plantation was going bankrupt; at an auction sale in 1829, the stately white home of Thomas Jefferson was bidden in for \$2,500; the speech, the tone of voice, and the human slant of the Declaration of Independence were fading out from approved conversation. As a region the South covered 880,000 square miles; less than one-fourth held in its grip the controlling economic and political element; on a peculiar strip of land, where cotton crops laughed with snow-white harvests, there lived in 1830 about a million and a half people, one in three a Negro. The dominant interest each year was the cotton crop; Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Great Britain, France sent more and more ships every year for this cotton crop; its bales in 1830 were worth \$29,000,000. On a crisscross neck of land running from lower North Carolina to the Red River counties of Louisiana and Arkansas was rising the cotton civilization. A phenomenon with a star of destiny, the talk of the world, was the South. Pot-luck hunters and rainbow-chasers came from states north, from Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe, hoping a small gamble would bring quick rich returns. Land wore out as the soil was mined and exploited without care or manure; so the worked-out land was left empty or rented to poorer whites, while the big planters turned west and farther west to fresh and virgin soils. Virginia cotton production slumped from 25,000,000 pounds in 1826 to 10,000,000 pounds in 1834; in the same time the cotton crops of Mississippi, far below the Allegheny Mountains, leaped from 20,000,000 to 85,000,000 pounds. The exploitation was decisive, blind, relentless. Superb timber on a million and more acres of land was cut down and burned or the trees girdled, the sap choked and the trunks deadened, to make room for more cotton crops. The covenants of the Federal Government with the Red Indian tribes were torn to scraps of paper while the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, and Chickasaw Indian tribes were charged with "an attempt to establish an independent government," and driven off their rich and wide tracts of land, to make room for cotton crops and the cotton civilization of the white man.

Sections of the South outside the Cotton Belt became economic tributaries of it; in parts of Virginia the breeding of Negroes for the slave-labor markets farther south had become a recognized live-stock business, selling 6,000 Negroes south every year; Alexandria was a loading point for brigs hauling cargoes of black freight to New Orleans; Delaware and Maryland were pouring fresh supplies into the famous barracoons or slave barracks selling and shipping regularly from Washington, D. C.; along the Wilderness Road and through Cumberland Gap moved kaffles or chain gangs headed away from the worn-out cotton lands of Virginia into strips of virgin soil south and west. The ships of smugglers on the high seas and the wagons of legitimate traders and breeders on the inland highways were carrying the fresh labor supplies called for by the big planters as imperative requisites toward larger cotton crops. Mississippi had doubled her Negro labor supply in ten years; Alabama had tripled hers. Tax assessors had counted more than two million slaves, taxable at more than a billion dollars. This Negro labor-supply was the backbone of wealth

production, connecting directly with the economic supremacy of the South as shown in its exports of cotton, tobacco, and rice between 1821 and 1830, which were valued at \$33,000,000.00 as against a total of only \$20,000,000.00 for all other states.

"Slave labor is more productive than free labor," was the argument of Thomas R. Dew, president of a Virginia college, replying before a legislative committee to other Virginians who were asking for a gradual emancipation of slaves. He pointed to the 470,000 slaves of Virginia as worth \$94,000,000.00 and nearly equal in value to one-half the assessed value of all the houses and lands of the state, or \$206,000,000.00. He respectfully challenged Jefferson's statement, "The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions," and countered, "Look to the slave-holding population and you everywhere find them characterized by noble and elevated sentiments; the most cruel masters are those who have been unaccustomed to slavery; it is well known that northern gentlemen who marry southern heiresses are much severer masters than southern gentlemen. The slaves of a good master are his warmest, most constant, and most devoted friends; we have often heard slave-holders affirm that they would sooner rely upon their slaves' fidelity and attachment in the hour of danger, than on any other equal number of individuals." He referred to the population of Virginia as "consisting of three castes, free white, free colored, and slave colored."

In 200 years there had been only three slave insurrections, with less than 100 lives lost, declared Dew, in discussing the Nat Turner insurrection in which Negro slaves one summer night killed 60 white persons in Southampton County. It was an action to be traced chiefly to a fanatical leader who heard voices in the air telling him he was sent from Heaven to save the slaves; an eclipse of the moon followed by a green sun were signs the work of emancipation should begin.

Slave labor is superior to free labor in southern climates, it was urged. "The slave districts in China, according to travelers, are determined by latitude and agricultural products; the wheat-growing districts have no slaves, but the rice-, cotton-, and sugar-growing districts situated in warm climates have all of them slaves." The sweeping postulates were stated: "The exclusive owners of property ever have been, ever will and perhaps ever ought to be, the virtual rulers of mankind. It is the order of nature and of God that the being of superior faculties and knowledge, and therefore of superior power, should control and dispose of those who are inferior. It is as much in the order of nature that men should enslave each other as that other animals should prey upon each other."

Circumstances beyond control of the southern states had brought slavery; it was a long age in developing and would take a long age to go; it was rooted so deep that no rash or sudden act could cut it loose. "The original sin of introduction rests not on our heads," declared Dew. "With regard to the assertion that slavery is against the spirit of Christianity, we are ready to admit the general assertion, but deny, most positively, that there is anything in the Old or New Testament to show the master commits any offense in holding slaves. No one can read the New Testament without seeing and admiring that

the meek and humble Savior of the world in no instance meddled with the established institutions of mankind; he came to save a fallen world, and not to excite the black passions of men, and array them in deadly hostility against each other; He nowhere encourages insurrection; he nowhere fosters discontent, but exhorts always to implicit obedience and fidelity."

A church association in Georgia had formally decided that when slave husbands and wives were separated by sale, either could marry again as though the other had died; "such separation, among persons situated as our slaves are, is civilly a separation by death, and in the sight of God, it would be so viewed." In North Carolina, to sell or to give a slave any book, the Bible not excepted, was punishable with 39 lashes for a free Negro or a \$200.00 fine for a white man. The statute urged that "teaching slaves to read and write tends to excite dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion." Twenty lashes "well laid on" was the penalty for slaves meeting for "religious worship" before sunrise or after sunset in South Carolina; in one year, thirty-five slaves were executed at Charleston, after trial and conviction on a charge of intended insurrection. Any meeting of slaves at any school, day or night, for instruction in reading or writing, was held by the laws of Virginia to be an act of unlawful assembly, punishable with twenty lashes on the back of any slave found in such school. In Louisiana, the penalty for teaching slaves to read and write was one year's imprisonment; in Georgia \$500.00 fine and imprisonment.

In South Carolina and Georgia, any person finding more than seven slaves together in the highway without a white person could give each one twenty lashes. In Maryland, for "rambling, riding, or going abroad in the night, or riding horses in the daytime, without leave," a slave could be whipped, have his ears cropped, be branded on the cheek with the letter R, or punished by any method which would not render the slave "unfit for labor."

Prices of slaves fluctuated with the market price of cotton. The coasts of Florida and the bayous of Louisiana were favorite places for the landing of wild Africans, to be later mixed with squads of American-born blacks and sold off singly or in couples. The captain of *La Fortuna*, a 90-ton schooner, brought 217 slaves from the African Gold Coast to Havana, Cuba, sold them for \$77,469, itemized a net profit of \$41,438.54 to the shipowners for an investment during six months of \$3,700.00 in the schooner, and a capital all told amounting to less than \$21,000.00. That is, they doubled their money in six months. The *Napoleon*, a Baltimore clipper, earned a profit of \$100,000.00 in one trip; she brought to the Cuban market 250 full-grown men and 100 picked boys and girls; cost per head was \$16.00; they sold for an average of \$360.00 per head. A first-class ship for carrying from 300 to 400 slaves cost less than \$30,000.00 and earned from \$35,000.00 to \$100,000.00 each voyage. Three to four voyages soaked the timbers of the vessel with such filth that no crew could sail it; seamen said the odor of a slave ship could be sniffed definitely in the ocean air more than "five miles down wind." The slaves were packed "spoon-fashion" in a space three feet, ten inches high, between decks, the men ironed together, two and two by the ankles, the women and children left unironed.

Cargoes were usually loaded on the west African coast where there were stations or depots to which Negro African tribal chiefs brought slaves, captives from defeated tribes, for sale; that is, Negroes sold Negroes to white men; most often the payment was in rum. In the later days of the trade there were larger lots of children in the cargo; they were easier to handle. Sometimes the Negro men and women refused to eat; they were flogged under commands to eat—and to sing and dance. Some tricked the captains into heavy blows, till they knew death was coming; then they smiled quiet mockery at the captains, saying, "Soon we shall be free." Home ports of many of the ships were in New England; at one time Newport alone had 150 ships hauling these oversea cargoes of perishable freight.

For more than 200 years, ships had sailed to the west African coast, shackled their loads of live stock, and hauled them to American harbors. John Rolfe, the white man who married the Indian princess Pocahontas, recorded in his diary one day in 1619 the arrival of a ship in the harbor of Jamestown, "a dutch man of warre that sold us twenty Negars." And since 1619, two centuries past, their increase through importation and birth had gone on till the census takers reckoned two million and more Negro slaves in the South.

Most of this Negro labor supply was on the large plantations, where the approved unit was a hundred slaves to a thousand acres. On a single plantation might be found coal-black Africans with slant skulls and low foreheads, direct from the jungles, speaking a guttural mumble; men and women of brown or bronze faces, with regular features; some who came evidently from Arabia or northern Africa, with flashes of intelligence and genius from old civilizations; and persons thirty-one thirty-seconds white blood and one thirty-second Negro blood, white in color, having manners, skill, and accomplishments, held as slaves.

The bulk of slaves were on the large one- or two-thousand-acre cotton plantations. Yet a slave-owner might be a small farmer raising crops with the help of one or two slaves who worked side by side with him in the fields. Or, the owner of a copper-faced slave might be a copper-faced Indian, as happened in a few instances. Or again the owner might be a free Negro; there were mulattoes and quadroons in New Orleans who owned Negro house-slaves. There were nearly 200,000 free Negroes in the South; most of them had been given papers of freedom by their masters. Every child of a Negro slave-mother was lawfully born as a slave and the property of her owner; there were slaves who knew their owners were their fathers. There were slim and appealing mulatto girls who sold for prices upward of \$3,000.00 each. There were free Negroes who had earned their freedom, had been arrested and convicted of violations of law, and sold at auction back into slavery. There were free Negroes, who had come back asking to live as slaves again, which happened in cases of Negroes given freedom on the plantation of John Randolph. There were house Negroes who considered themselves superior to field Negroes; there were field Negroes who had contempt for struggling white farmers, called "po' w'ite trash."

There were Negroes who had been jailed and charged with crimes in New

York, shackled, put on ships and unloaded at Gulf-coast states; one ship from New York came to New Orleans with 70 such Negroes from New York prisons; the brig *Mary Ann* in 1818 took 36 Negroes from Perth Amboy, New Jersey, to New Orleans, where a newspaper remarked: "It is probable the greater part of these unfortunate creatures were stolen; Negro trading seems to be actively carried on through certain great villains holding their headquarters in New Jersey."

Great Britain, France, and Sweden had an agreement to handle slave-traders as "pirates, felons, and robbers"; they had agreed to search each other's ships. The United States held off from this agreement—and the favorite flag of the slave ships along the coast of Africa was the Stars and Stripes. The American flag was protection against search from any vessels except American cruisers, operating under orders from the Secretary of the Navy at Washington, who was responsible to a President who was a slaveholder.

Thus in the early thirties was weaving the fabric of an empire, a pastoral and agricultural nation, with its foundations resting on three chief conditions: (1) the special fertility of a certain strip of land for cotton crops; (2) the raising of the cotton crop by Negro slave labor; (3) the sale of that crop to northern American and to English cotton-mills that sold their finished products in a constantly widening world market. The planters who had control of its destiny, in so far as there was control rather than blind luck and brute hazard, were men of pride, valor, and cunning; they lived on horseback, accustomed to command.

The North was a section of country fumbling and groping toward control of water power, iron, steel, canals, railways, ocean-going boats. Her controlling men sat in office chairs, accustomed to add and subtract, measure and multiply, with maps, statistics, diagrams and designs before their eyes. By one route and another, the money of American regions was streaming toward banks in New York, Philadelphia and Boston. Brickyards were running night and day in order that new factories and mills might rise on the banks of swift-running rivers whose water power would operate woolen and cotton mills. The ten years before 1830 had seen the mills of New England and the Middle States triple their output twice over. The shipping, mercantile, fisheries, and farming interests of New England slipped back from their places of importance to make room for the manufacturing interests, which, with their allied banks, were taking the chief control.

Cotton mills were the industrial phenomenon; each year they called for increasing tens of millions of pounds of cotton from the South; they produced cotton goods worth \$2,500,000 in 1820, and their value kept mounting till in 1831 the total was \$15,500,000; in the same period the woolen-mill output increased from less than \$1,000,000 to more than \$11,000,000. It was a process that shook up culture, religion, and politics in New England and so mixed the currents of its destinies that Daniel Webster wrote, "We are disgraced beyond help or hope; there is a Federal interest, a Democratic interest, a bankrupt interest, an orthodox interest, and a middling interest; but I see no national

interest, nor any national feeling in the whole matter." The spinning-wheels and distaffs of millions of homes had become old-fashioned; their place was the garret and attic; spinning was to be done in cotton and woolen mills and clothes were to be cheap.

From thousands of farms the people moved into the industrial cities to go to work, men, women, and children, in the mills. Other thousands of New England farmers were selling out and moving via the Erie Canal over into the Mohawk Valley and western New York, or out still farther west into Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois. Some could tell of the New England farmer who called a minister to pray for better crops from the soil; and the minister, after looking over the stony and stingy soil, had said, "This farm doesn't need prayer—what this farm needs is manure!"

Farmers' daughters filled the cotton mills in Lowell, Massachusetts; they started work at five o'clock in the morning and worked till seven o'clock in the evening, with a half-hour off for breakfast, and forty-five minutes off at noon for dinner; they spent fourteen hours a day at the factory and had ten hours a day left in which to sleep and to refresh themselves and to improve their minds and bodies. One girl, operating a single spinning-machine, carrying 3,000 spindles, spun as much cotton cloth as 3,000 girls working by hand a single thread at a time on the old-fashioned spinning-wheel. In fifteen years the price of ordinary cloths for sheeting had dropped from forty cents a yard to eight and one-half cents a yard.

Bells rang at "break of day" in some factory towns; the workers tumbled out of sleep, crept into their clothes and reported at the factory gates in fifteen minutes, when the gates closed. An hour or two later, twenty-five minutes was allowed for breakfast, and at noon twenty-five minutes was again allowed for dinner. The gates were opened at eight o'clock at night to let the workers go back to supper, play, amusements, recreation, education, strong drink, sleep, or whatever they chose till the ringing of the bell again the next morning at "break of day." The Hope factory in Rhode Island ran on this plan. In the Eagle Mill at Griswold, Connecticut, the work-day lasted fifteen hours and ten minutes. At Paterson, New Jersey, women and children began the day's work at half-past four o'clock in the morning. Overseers in some textile mills cracked a cowhide whip over women and children. "The only opportunities allowed to children generally, employed in manufactories, to obtain an education, are on the Sabbath and after half-past eight o'clock of the evening of other days," declared the report of a committee of the newly organized New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Workingmen.

In language dark as the early winter dawns in which boys and girls went to work rubbing sleep from their eyes, the association declared its purpose to be "the organization of the whole laboring class," with the express hope "to imbue our offspring with abhorrence for the usurpations of aristocracy, so that they shall dedicate their lives to a completion of the work which their ancestors commenced in their struggle for *national*, and their sires have continued in their contest for *personal*, independence." The first labor paper on the American continent, *The Workman's Advocate*, had been started in

New York by two English workingmen. It was followed by *The Mechanics' Free Press*.

A jury in New York City heard the evidence against striking workingmen charged with "conspiring to raise wages" and awarded a fine of one dollar. The growing wage-earning class was organizing trade associations, and in Philadelphia had formed its first central body of such associations. Strikes were called to raise wages, to bar from work the nonunion men known later as "rats" and "scabs." But most of all the strikes were aimed to get the ten-hour work-day. In politics this labor movement stood against jailing for debt, against banking monopoly, for easier access to public lands, for schools open to all, for the United States mails to run on the Sabbath, for limitation of ownership of land to 160 acres per person, and for "abolition of chattel slavery and of wages slavery."

Thread, yarn, twine, sheeting, shirting, ticking, print cloth, gingham, and bags were leaving North Atlantic states for all parts of the world. They went west on the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes; they were on Ohio River flat-boats going west and south; they were loaded on pack horses and mules moving in four parallel columns from Independence, Missouri, for the seventy-day trip to Santa Fe, where they were traded for gold dust, buffalo skins, rugs, Mexican blankets. The South was buying back in finished cloth part of the cotton it raised. Ships leaving North Atlantic ports carried cargoes for South America. The United States had become in 1830 second only to England in the amount of cotton it bought for its humming spindles. In 1831, were reported 795 mills, 1,246,500 spindles and 70,000 mill workers. The industrial and commercial fact of cotton had moved into world history as a reckonable factor. The seeds of a "tree wool," gathered in India by Englishmen and planted in Bermuda and from there transplanted to South Carolina and Georgia, had spread and grown till they were part of the lives and work of millions of people.

Yet the development was merely in its beginnings. In New York and Pennsylvania, companies were organizing to mine the iron and coal fields. In the coming ten years the railroads and steamboats would want iron and steel for their equipment and rolling-stock, and coal to generate steam power. And with railroads and steamboats connecting the cotton plantations with the cotton mills of America and Europe, and then moving the finished products with higher speed to the world-wide markets, there would be realized another step in the international industrial revolution. Patents on new tools, machines, and devices had more than doubled in ten years; in 1830 there were 544 patents granted. The pilgrim people who came to the North Atlantic coast with Milton and Bunyan in their veins, with Bibles and prayer-books in their hands, were to gain a world name for a figure known as the Inventive Yankee, making breech-loading firearms, air pumps, rock drills, lathes, planing machines, pile drivers, truss frames, harvesters and reapers, sewing machines. Edward Everett issued an essay on "The Inevitable March of Improvement."

Three thousand prisoners were in jail for debt in Massachusetts, 10,000 in

New York, 7,000 in Pennsylvania, and 3,000 in Maryland. In one city forty cases were recorded in which the sum total of the debt was \$23.40, an average of less than sixty cents for each prisoner.

An industrial civilization was coming over the Middle States and New England. It covered less than 175,000 square miles and held a little more than 6,000,000 people, elements of Dutch blood in New York, Germans and Scotch-Irish in Pennsylvania, Swedes in Delaware and Philadelphia. And there were Irish in New York; one of their kith and kin had put through the Erie Canal project against the opposition of the Irish in the Tammany Society; they toiled on canals in Massachusetts.

The proudest, most cohesive unit in the North was New England; she had dialect, religion, law, climate, and regional personality enough to set up as a nation by herself, if there had been enough salt water or steep mountains to isolate her; geography and history were her enemies in that respect; when her shipping and trade were shot to pieces in the War of 1812, and she was ready and set for secession from the Union of states, events shifted.

And so, over New England and the Middle States had sprung up, without forewarning or foretelling, the beginnings of a civilization of power-driven looms, wage-earning labor, of iron, coal, and fast transport. The controlling men sat in office chairs, accustomed to add and subtract, measure and multiply, with maps, statistics, diagrams and designs before their eyes. The fabric and structure of the basic system of life at the North was in high contrast to that of the South. The big word in the South was Chivalry. In the North it was Improvements.

In the West, if there was a big word, it was something like "Freedom" or "Independence," or a slogan, "Hands Off." Its reckonings were under large skies and in spreading numbers. For the West was a stretch of country with the Great Lakes at the north, the Gulf of Mexico to the south, the Allegheny Mountains to the east, and a ragged-edged, shifty frontier on the west, moving its line farther west every year out into the Great Plains and beyond toward the Rocky Mountains. Its controlling physical feature was the Mississippi River waterway system, branching with tireless streams fed by regular rainfalls, into a region covering one and a quarter million square miles.

Pioneers in waves were crossing this stretch of country; there was an element of movers always selling out, packing up, and passing on, some saying, "It's time to move if you can hear your neighbor's shotgun." The early settlers had clung to rivers and timbers; now they were locating on prairie land and learning to farm it. Each wave of settlers made it easier for more to come. The young Frenchman, De Tocqueville, was writing: "This gradual and continuous progress of the European race toward the Rocky Mountains has the solemnity of a providential event; it is like a deluge of men rising unabatedly and daily driven onward by the hand of God!"

The New York millionaire fur-trader, Astor, was buying thousand-acre tracts in Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin. For De Tocqueville had noted also: "The Valley of the Mississippi is, upon the whole, the most magnificent dwelling-place prepared by God for man's abode; and yet it may be said that

at present it is but a mighty desert." Wild horses roamed in grass taller than their heads, occasionally roped and broken by white men. Buffaloes were killed by thousands, the skins sold in St. Louis or New Orleans, the carcasses left on the open plains for the wolves and crows. Little populations were pocketed in corners where European races were intermingled with Indians and Negroes. Off southwest Texas was calling; cabins were empty in Kentucky and Tennessee with a scribble on the doors, "Gone to Texas"; a boom was on; men and women slanged each other, "Go to Texas"; six years had seen over 20,000 settlers, rustlers, horsemen, enter Texas. And a restless pioneer breed swarmed overland by wagon, horse, and afoot, across the Allegheny Mountains; in ten years the West had added a million and a half people; its population was one-third of the United States.

Connecting products with market, they took horses, mules, cattle, and hogs across country on foot, sometimes four and five thousand hogs in a drove; the turnpike gate at Cumberland Gap saw live stock worth a million dollars in the year 1828; tobacco and whisky worth another million dollars passed over the Falls of the Ohio at Louisville in one year; aggregates of a million dollars were getting common. Corn, oats, barley, hay were fed to cattle and hogs that walked to market, or the grain was distilled into whisky for concentrated transport. Three thousand wagons were making hauls east from Pittsburgh to traders in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York; feeding grounds for live stock had been located on plantations along the Potomac River where cattle were fattened for the eastern markets. Cincinnati had the nickname of "Porkopolis" and was packing hams, bacon, and salt pork. Exports from the West had mounted in 1830 to \$17,800,000.

The West had become a granary sending food supplies to the factory and textile-mill towns of New England and the Middle States, to Great Britain and France, as well as corn, horses, and mules to the big cotton planters of the South. It was of immense importance, then, that in the year 1831, for the first time, goods were shipped from the Atlantic seaboard to St. Louis by way of Chicago at one-third lower cost than by the New Orleans route. History was in the reckoning. Cheaper and quicker movement of corn and cattle going east, and of textiles, iron, hardware, and human passengers coming west, would set up new connections west, east, south, and overseas.

Over the earth were many little dramas of personal struggle and hope in that year 1831. A cadet named Edgar Allan Poe, guilty of "neglect" and "disobedience," had been thrown out of the West Point military academy and was writing poetry, drinking whisky, toiling with black bats in the belfries. A young English doctor named Charles Darwin, just twenty-one years old, was starting on a five-year trip in a ship, the *Beagle*; he was taking along thick pads of writing-paper to put down notes about plants, animals, rocks, weather.

An Englishman, Michael Faraday, had been working in a partnership of international scientists, with facts and principles handed him by the Italian, Alessandro Volta, the Dane, Hans Christian Oersted, the Frenchman, A. M.

Ampère, the German, G. S. Ohm, toilers on the borderland of fact and speculation; proud, conjectural fools in the realms of wire, plates, pivoted magnets, currents, circuits, attractions, and repulsions; they had identified, caged, captured, and measured that lightning terror, electrodynamic force; hitherto "electricity" had been a useless, mysterious juice; Faraday was making a dynamo; he was going to harness, drive and use the power of electromagnetism.

Such were a few of the things the white moon in its high riding over the sky might have told Abraham Lincoln that spring night in 1831. He would have listened with an understanding head and heart because he was blood and bone of North, South, and West, because there were in him the branched veins of New England emigrant, Middle State Quaker, Virginia planter, and Kentucky pioneer. As the regions of America grew and struggled, he might understand their growth and struggle.

In ten years there had been other little dramas of personal struggle and hope besides the one of Abraham Lincoln. John Keats, the poet, had died at twenty-five years of age among the ivies, marbles, and lizards of Rome, buried with his own epitaph on the gravestone: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." In the same year passed out Napoleon with the declaration: "I die in the Apostolical and Roman religion, in the bosom of which I was born; it is my wish that my ashes may repose on the banks of the Seine, in the midst of the French people whom I have loved so well." The next year had seen the poet Shelley drowned in the Mediterranean and his body burned and its ashes placed next to the burial urn of Keats; only the year before he had written of Keats, "I weep for Adonais—he is dead." Two years more and the poet Lord Byron, fighting in Greece and far from home, in so far as he had a home, died of fever; of him Shelley had written, "Space wondered less at the swift and fair creations of God when he grew weary of vacancy, than I at this spirit of an angel in the mortal paradise of a decaying body"; while Symonds, a critic, was to write, "It was his misfortune to be well born, but ill bred." Beethoven, too, stepped out of his mortal frame, having been deaf twelve years so that the finest music he knew was in the inner arrangements of sound and silence known only to his own imagination; an escort of 20,000 music lovers swarmed to his grave the day he was laid away. In London town, the mad, sweet, colossal poet, William Blake, had died; "he wandered up and he wandered down, Ever alone with God."

Out of them all, a little flame blue, from the gray of their ashes, lived on.

Each had sung in his own way that line young Abraham Lincoln had written with a turkey-feather pen at Pigeon Creek: "Time! What an empty vapor 'tis!"

In the summer of the year 1831, Abraham Lincoln, twenty-two years old, floated a canoe down the Sangamon River, going to a new home, laughter

and youth in his bones, in his heart a few pennies of dreams, in his head a rag-bag of thoughts he could never expect to sell.

Catfish and bass, perch and pike, flipped in the still waters at the edge of the stream; they could be taken with a hook. The shadows of a bluejay, a kingfisher, moved flying over the water of the Sangamon, and once the silhouette of a bald eagle moved up a slope of bottom land away from the river—and these shadows were the same as air.

Crows went by, leaving the hoarse hawk of their caw-cry in the air. Long willows drowsed with hung-down branches in the green scum of muddy by-waters at a standstill. A slippery muskrat might swim out of the hole of a rotten log to look at the weather of the day. Seldom—and yet once or twice—a bullfrog croaked his basso profundo croak.

Glimpses of landscape flitted by where the bee and dragonfly were going amid Indian pink and the bluebell and running wild rose. Red haw and the bitter fox-grape had intimations of fall-time to come. Behind the bumblebees buzzing in the yellow dust of goldenrod leaves, and behind the streamers of haze around the river curves, were hints, almost statements, of a future to follow the present, the intertwining of hours to come with hours that are.

New Salem, the town on a hill, to which Abraham Lincoln was shunting his canoe, was a place of promise there in the year 1831, just as all towns in Illinois then were places of promise. New Salem then had a dozen families as its population, just as Chicago in the same year reckoned a dozen families and no more. Both had water transportation, outlets, tributary territory, yet one was to be only a phantom hamlet of memories and ghosts, a wind-swept hilltop kept as cherished haunts are kept.

New Salem stood on a hill, a wrinkle of earth crust, a convulsive knob of rock and sod. The Sangamon River takes a curve as it comes to the foot of that bluff and looks up. It is almost as though the river said, "For such a proud standing hill as this I must make a proud winding curve for it to look at."

Up on the ridge level of that bluff, the buffalo, the wild horse, the wild hog and the Red Indian had competed for occupation a thousand years and more. Herds of shaggy-whiskered buffalo had roamed the Sangamon Valley; deer antlers had been plowed up and arched above doorways where men six feet tall walked under without stooping. Plows had turned up brown and white flint arrowheads of Indian hunters, red men whose learning had included buffalo and snake dances, and a necromancy of animal life unknown to men of the white race. Before the rifle and plow of the white man, the red man in that particular southern region of Illinois had moved off, had, in the words of some who followed, "gone and skedaddled." Yet the red man was still a near enough presence to be spoken of as more than a ghost who had just passed.

At the foot of a bluff where the Sangamon begins its curve, a thousand wagon-loads of gravel had been hauled and packed into the river to make a power-dam and mill-grind. The Rutledges and Camerons who started the mill bought the ridge of land on the bluff above and in 1829 laid out a town,

sold lots, put up a log tavern with four rooms, and named the place New Salem.

Farmers came from fifty miles away to have their grain turned into flour and to buy salt, sugar, coffee, handkerchiefs, hardware, and calico prints and bonnets. If people asked, "Has the mud wagon come in?" they referred to the stagecoach driving from Havana to Springfield once a week, and carrying mail to the New Salem post office. The town in its time had a sawmill, fifteen houses, a hundred people, two doctors, a school, a church and Sunday school, a saloon, and a squire and two constables. The Herndon brothers, Rowan and James, kept a store; so did the partnership of Samuel Hill and James McNamar; also one Reuben Radford had a grocery.

And Denton Offut, who had rented the Rutledge and Cameron gristmill, had ordered a stock of goods and was going to open a new store, with A. Lincoln as clerk in charge. When Offut had seen Lincoln handle his flatboat on the New Salem mill-dam so masterfully, Offut had told people he would soon have a regular steamboat running up and down the Sangamon with Lincoln as captain; the boat would run the year round, in all weathers, with rollers for shoals and dams, runners for ice; Offut said that with Lincoln in charge, "By thunder, she'd have to go!" A hustler, a boomer, and a booster was Offut; nips from a bottle of corn juice doubled his natural enthusiasms; his vision took in wide empires of business, though he was blind to the barriers.

Election Day was on when Lincoln arrived in New Salem and loafed along the main street. At the voting-place they told him a clerk was wanted and asked if he could write. Of course, he might have answered that where he came from in Indiana he used to write letters for the whole township; instead he answered with an up-and-down of careless inflections, "Oh, I guess I can make a few rabbit tracks." So, with a goose quill he sat registering ballots that first day in New Salem; and he felt as much at home with the goose quill as he had felt with the ax, the hoe, the flatboat oars, and other instruments he had handled.

The voting was by word of mouth. Each voter told the election judges which candidates he wanted to vote for. Then a judge would bawl out the voter's name and his candidates, which names would be written down by the clerks. Lincoln got acquainted with names and faces of nearly all the men in New Salem on his first day there.

Offut's stock for the new store had not come as yet, so when Dr. Nelson, who was leaving New Salem for Texas, said he wanted a pilot to take his flatboat through the channels of the Sangamon to Beardstown on the Illinois River, Lincoln was willing. When he came back from that little job, he said there were times he ran the flatboat three miles off onto the prairies, but always got back to the main channel of the Sangamon. A genius of drollery was recognized by the New Salem folks as having come among them to live with and be one of them. They were already passing along the lizard story, a yarn spun by the newcomer the first day he arrived. He had said it happened

in Indiana and was as strange as many other things that had happened in Indiana.

In a meeting-house far and deep in the tall timbers, a preacher was delivering a sermon, wearing old-fashioned baggy pantaloons fastened with one button and no suspenders, while his shirt was fastened at the collar with one button. In a loud voice he announced his text for the day, "I am the Christ, whom I shall represent today." And about that time a little blue lizard ran up under one of the baggy pantaloons. The preacher went ahead with his sermon, slapping his legs. After a while the lizard came so high that the preacher was desperate, and, going on with his sermon, unbuttoned the one button that held his pantaloons; they dropped down and with a kick were off. By this time the lizard had changed his route and circled around under the shirt at the back, and the preacher, repeating his text, "I am the Christ, whom I shall represent today," loosened his one collar button and with one sweeping movement off came the shirt. The congregation sat in the pews dazed and dazzled; everything was still for a minute; then a dignified elderly lady stood up slowly and, pointing a finger toward the pulpit, called out at the top of her voice, "I just want to say that if you represent Jesus Christ, sir, then I'm done with the Bible."

Men were telling of Lincoln and a crew loading Squire Godbey's hogs onto a flatboat down at Blue Banks; the hogs were slippery and stubborn and the crew couldn't chase them on board. The gossip was that Lincoln said, "Sew their eyes shut." And farmers were "argufyin'" as to whether a hog is easier handled when his eyes are sewed shut.

On a lot Offut bought for ten dollars, he and Lincoln built a cabin of logs; this was to be the new store, and Lincoln started boarding at the home of the Reverend John Cameron, whose eleven daughters ran the house.

Offut's goods arrived; Lincoln stacked shelves and corners with salt, sugar, tea, coffee, molasses, butter and eggs, whisky, tobacco, hardware, stoneware, cups and saucers, plates, dishes, calico prints, hats, bonnets, gloves, socks, shoes. Bill Green, the eighteen-year-old son of Squire Bowling Green, was put in as a helper mainly to tell Lincoln which of the customers were good pay. Offut's enthusiasm about his new clerk ran high: "He knows more than any man in the United States. . . . Some day he will be President of the United States. . . . He can outrun, outlift, outwrestle, and throw down any man in Sangamon County."

And the Clary's Grove Boys, just four miles away, began talking about these claims; what they said mostly was, "Is that so?" Bill Clary, who ran a saloon thirty steps north of the Offut store, put up a bet of ten dollars with Offut that Lincoln couldn't throw Jack Armstrong, the Clary's Grove champion.

Sports from fifty miles around came to a level square next to Offut's store to see the match; bets ran high, from money to jackknives and treats of whisky. Armstrong was short and powerful in build with the muscle haunches of a wild steer; his aim from the first was to get in close on his man where he would have the advantage of his thick muscular strength.

Lincoln held him off with long arms, wore down his strength, got him out of breath and out of temper. Armstrong then fouled by stamping on Lincoln's right foot and instep with his boot heel. This exasperated Lincoln so that he lost his temper, lifted Armstrong up by the throat and off the ground, shook him like a rag, and then slammed him to a hard fall, flat on his back.

As Armstrong lay on the ground, a champion in the dust of defeat, his gang from Clary's Grove started to swarm toward Lincoln, with hot Kentucky and Irish epithets on their lips. Lincoln stepped to where his back was against a wall, braced himself, and told the gang he was ready for 'em.

Then Jack Armstrong broke through the front line of the gang, shook Lincoln's hand and told the gang Lincoln was "fair," had won the match, and, "He's the best feller that ever broke into this settlement."

As the Clary's Grove Boys looked Lincoln over they decided he was one of them; he weighed 180 pounds; he was hard as nails; he outran the footracers of Sangamon County; he threw the maul and crowbar farthest; he told the lizard story; he saved a flatboat that looked like a wreck on the Cameron mill-dam. Yes, he belonged; even though he didn't drink whisky nor play cards, he belonged. They called on him to judge their horse-races and chicken fights, umpire their matches, and settle disputes. Their homes were open to him. He was adopted.

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Counting the money a woman paid for dry goods one day, Lincoln found she had paid six and a quarter cents more than her bill; that night he walked six miles to pay it back. Once, finding he weighed tea with a four-ounce weight instead of an eight, he wrapped up another quarter of a pound of tea, took a long walk and delivered to the woman the full order of tea she had paid for. A loafer used the wrong kind of language when women customers were in the store one day; Lincoln had warned him to stop; he talked back. Lincoln took him in front of the store, threw him on the ground and rubbed smartweed in his face. When trade was slack he split rails for Offut and built a pen to hold a thousand hogs.

The two clerks, Lincoln and young Bill Green, slept together on a narrow cot in the back of the store; "when one turned over, the other had to." When a small gambler tricked Bill, Lincoln told Bill to bet him the best fur hat in the store that he (Lincoln) could lift a barrel of whisky from the floor and hold it while he took a drink from the bunghole. Bill hunted up the gambler, made the bet and won it; Lincoln lifted the barrel off the floor, sat squatting on the floor, rolled the barrel on his knees till the bunghole reached his mouth, drank a mouthful, let the barrel down—and stood up and spat out the whisky.

Wildcat money, "rag money," "shinplasters," came across the counter sometimes. The clerk asked a customer, "What kind of money have you?" Once in a while he told about a Mississippi steamboat captain, short of firewood, who steered to a landing-place and offered the man in charge wildcat money

for wood; but the owner of the wood said he could only trade "cord for cord," a cord of money for a cord of wood.

Lincoln and John Brewer acted as seconds for Henry Clark and Ben Wilcox when those two settled a dispute with a stand-up and knockdown fight with bare fists. The seconds had washed the blood off the faces and shoulders of the two fighters, when John Brewer, whose head came about as high as Lincoln's elbows, strutted like a bantam rooster up to Lincoln and broke out, "Abe, my man licked yours and I can lick you." Lincoln searched his challenger with a quizzical look and drawled: "I'll fight you, John, if you'll chalk your size on me. And every blow outside counts foul." In the laugh of the crowd even Brewer joined.

Between times, in spare hours, and in watches of the night when sleep came to the town and river, Lincoln toiled and quested for the inner lights of what was known as education and knowledge. Mentor Graham, the schoolmaster, told him there was a grammar at Vaner's house, six miles off; he walked the six miles, brought back the book, burned pine shavings in the blacksmith shop to light a book with a title page saying it held, "English Grammar in Familiar Lectures accompanied by a Compendium embracing a New Systematick Order of Parsing, a New System of Punctuation, Exercises in False Syntax, and a Key to the Exercises, designed for the Use of Schools and Private Learners. By Samuel Kirkham." As he got farther into the book, he had Bill Green at the store hold it and ask him questions. When Bill asked what adverbs qualify, Lincoln replied, "Adverbs qualify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs." When Bill asked "What is a phrase?" the answer came, "A phrase is an assemblage of words, not constituting an entire proposition, but performing a distinct office in the structure of a sentence or of another phrase."

Geography he studied without knowing he was studying geography. The store had calico prints from Massachusetts, tea from China, coffee from Brazil, hardware and stoneware from New York and Pennsylvania, products and utensils from the hands and machines of men hundreds and thousands of miles away. The feel of other human zones, and a large world to live in, connected with the Offut grocery stock.

A literary and debating society was formed in New Salem, with the educated and accomplished people as members, and all others who wished to "advance" themselves. Lincoln stood up for his first speech one evening. And there was close attention. For they all knew this was a joker, the young husky who brought the lizard story to their town, the lusty buck who grappled Jack Armstrong and slammed him for a fall, the pleasant spinner of yarns. He opened his address in a tone of apology, as though he had been thinking over what he was going to say, but he wasn't sure he could put on the end of his tongue the ideas operating in his head. He went on with facts, traced back and picked up essential facts and wove them into an argument, apologized again and said he hoped the argument would stand on its own legs and command respect. His hands wandered out of the pockets of his pantaloons

and punctuated with loose gestures some of the decisive propositions, after which his hands slowly and easily slid back into the pantaloons pockets.

Then it came to Lincoln through the talk of friends that James Rutledge, the president of the society, was saying there was "more than wit and fun" in Abe's head; he was already a fine speaker; all he lacked was "culture to enable him to reach a high destiny which was in store for him." Lincoln noticed that Mr. Rutledge looked more keenly into his face and was more kindly in manner.

This had a double interest for the young store-clerk, because he had spent afternoon and evenings in the Rutledge tavern, and he had almost trembled and dark waves ran through him as he had looked wholly and surely into the face of the slim girl with corn-silk hair, Ann Rutledge, the eighteen-year-old daughter of James Rutledge.

When all New Salem laughed and wondered at the way he saved his flat-boat when it hung over the dam the spring before, he had glimpsed this slim girl with light corn-silk hair, blue-eyed, pink-fair. Since then he had spoken with her as she sat sewing in a hickory splint chair, a quiet soft bud of a woman.

Some mentioned her as "beautiful"; the Clary's Grove Boys said she "wasn't hard to look at." While her two sisters, Nancy and Margaret, helped their mother with the dishes and the baby, Sarah, Ann did the sewing for all the women and showed new stitches to other New Salem girls who came in.

After the first evening in which Lincoln had sat next to her and found that bashful words tumbling from his tongue's end really spelled themselves out into sensible talk, her face, as he went away, kept coming back. So often all else would fade out of his mind and there would be only this riddle of a pink-fair face, a mouth and eyes in a frame of light corn-silk hair. He could ask himself what it meant and search his heart for an answer and no answer would come. A trembling took his body and dark waves ran through him sometimes when she spoke so simple a thing as, "The corn is getting high, isn't it?"

The name "Ann Rutledge" would come to him and he would pronounce it softly to the shadows in the blacksmith shop where he lay burning wood shavings to light the pages of Kirkham's Grammar. He knew the Rutledges branched back out of South Carolina and the Revolutionary War Rutledges, one of whom signed the Declaration of Independence; their names were in high places; her father was a southern gentleman of the old school; and he, Abe Lincoln, was from the Kentucky "Linkerns" who had a hard time to read and write. His heart would be hurting if he hadn't learned long ago to laugh at himself with a horse laugh.

The Cameron girls, where he boarded, tried to tease him about his long legs, long arms, his horsy ways; and he was always ready to admit he "wasn't much to look at." And as the blue spray from one young woman's eyes haunted him, he felt it was enough to have looked into such a face and to have learned that such an earthly frame as that of Ann Rutledge had been

raised out of the breathing dust. He could say, and it was easy to say, "It can't happen that a sucker like me can have a gal like her."

During the winter of 1832, as Abe Lincoln took down calico prints from the shelves of the Offut store and measured off as many yards as the women customers asked for, or as he stepped to the whisky barrels and measured out as many quarts or gallons as the men customers asked for, he had warnings that the business of Denton Offut in New Salem was going to pieces. Offut was often filling his personal pocket-flask at his own barrels of pure and unsurpassed Kentucky rye whisky; he was more often loose with his tongue and its descriptions and predictions. Once it was said, "He talks too much with his mouth." As his cash dwindled and his prospects faded, his eyes became more red, his face more bleary and it was harder for his tongue to persuade men of the rainbow empires he saw beyond the horizon; it was said, "Offut is petering out."

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The sawmill, the gristmill, the stores, and the post office of New Salem drew customers from different localities, such as Rock Creek, Clary's Grove, Little Grove, Concord, Sand Ridge, Indian Point, New Market, and Athens. The people mostly traced back to Kentucky and Virginia families, but Yankees from New England, Down-easters from New York, Pennsylvania Dutch, and emigrants from the British Isles and from Germany were sprinkled through. From the east of New Salem came the Smoots, Godbys, Rigginses, Watkinses, Whites, Wilcoxes, Clarks, Straders, Baxters; from the north came the Pantiers, Clarys, Armstrongs, Wagoners; from the west the Berrys, Bones, Greens, Potters, Armstrongs, Clarks, Summerses, Grahams, Gums, Spearses, Conovers, Whites, Joneses; from the south the Tibbses, Wisemans, Hoheimers, Hornbuckles, Purkapiles, Matplings, Goldbys, Wynns, Cogdals.

They were corn-fed. The grain that came in sacks, flung over horses riding to the mill at New Salem dam, was nearly all corn, seldom wheat or rye. The mill ran all the year, and the people ate corn six days in the week and usually on Sunday. Milk and mush, or milk with corn-bread crumbled in it, was the baby food. For the grown-ups there were corndodgers. Two quarts of corn meal were mixed with cold water, a finger of salt thrown in, and into a well-greased skillet the cook put three pones (cakes), giving each pone a pat so as to leave the print of her hand on the bread; the skillet lid was fastened tight and a shovel of coal put on top; then, with hot charcoal over and under, the skillet was put in the fireplace. Sometimes, it was said, the cake came out "so hard that you could knock a Texas steer down with a chunk of it or split a board forty yards off."

On Saturdays young men off the farms came riding in. Horse races, with Abe Lincoln for judge, were run off between the river and Jacob Bale's place. There, too, were the gander pullings. An old tough gander was swung head down from the limb of a tree, with his neck greased slippery. Riders, who paid ten cents for the chance, rode full-speed, and the one who grabbed the gander's neck and pulled the head off, got the bird.

Up the river the boys sometimes took colts to break. They had found that a horse in water over his depth is helpless and will learn to obey. The boys would take one in, several would get onto his back, others would cling to his mane and tail, and by the time they let him come out, he could understand better the language of men speaking to horses.

Some Saturdays, when there were no strangers to pick a fight with, they fought among themselves. A gang of Wolverines from Wolf had taken on drinks in Petersburg one day and were on their horses pulling at each other's shirts, when little Johnny Wiseman called out to Greasy George Miller, "George, you have torn my shirt." "Yes," said George, "and I can tear your hide, too." And the gang got off their horses, formed a ring, and watched Wiseman and Miller fight it out till one had enough.

Between some families there was bitter hate year on year; they called it a "feud" between the families. Once two men met on the New Salem side of the river, spat hate at each other before a crowd of men, and then decided to go alone across the river and fight it out. They crossed over, stripped their clothes, and fought as wolves fight, with claw, tooth, and fang, till men came from over the river, parted them, and made them shake hands. One of the fighters was sick for a year and then died of his wounds and gouges.

And there were people who tried to stop the fighting, horse racing, gambling, and drinking. Through churches, schools, books, temperance societies, and the Government, they tried to correct these habits, and institute industry, thrift, sobriety, and bring into favor the admonition of St. Paul, "Let all things be done decently and in order." As many as fifty men, women, and children on one Sunday were baptized in the Sangamon River. The Methodists, Campbellites, Presbyterians, kept growing; at first the members of a faith met in a dwelling-house; then they had grove camp-meetings, and as they grew in membership they erected churches and sent delegates to state and national conferences, synods, presbyteries.

The most famous of all preachers in southern Illinois then was Peter Cartwright, a Jackson Democrat, a fighting Methodist, a scorner of Baptists, and an enemy of whisky, gambling, jewelry, fine clothes, and higher learning. As he visited along the Sangamon River, he would tell anecdotes. "I recollect once to have come across one of these Latin and Greek scholars, a regular graduate in theology. In order to bring me into contempt in a public company he addressed me in Greek. In my younger days I had learned considerable of German. I listened to him as if I understood it all, and then replied in Dutch. This he knew nothing about, neither did he understand Hebrew. He concluded that I had answered him in Hebrew, and immediately caved in, and stated to the company that I was the first educated Methodist preacher he ever saw."

And taking dinner with the governor of the State of Illinois, Cartwright stopped the serving of victuals by saying, "Hold on, Governor, ask the blessing." The governor said he couldn't, he didn't know how. So Cartwright pronounced the blessing—and afterward rebuked the governor for not being a practicing Christian.

One of the oldest and best loved of the Cumberland Presbyterians was Uncle Jimmy Pantier. He was a faith healer said to have cured cases of snake bite and of the bite of a mad dog; he took the patient into a room, rubbed the wound, mumbled unknown words, and sometimes the patient stood up and walked free from evil. Uncle Jimmy took a front seat at church services and would repeat the sermon as fast as the preacher preached it; he would nod approval or again shake a finger at the preacher and say in an undertone, "You are mistaken," or "That is not so, brother." He had hunted all manner of wild beasts, owned large tracts of land, wore a buckskin fringed shirt, and was a friend and neighbor to all men in the Sangamon River country.

Out around the New Salem neighborhood were men and women known to everybody. The father of James Short, for instance, was pointed out at the Fourth of July picnics as a soldier who had fought in the Revolutionary War; he had become a wild-turkey hunter, and once in blazing away at fifty had killed sixteen turkeys. Another veteran who had served under the Commander-in-Chief George Washington was Daddy Boger, who lived in Wolf and wove bushel baskets out of white oak splints; he would go to town with a basket under each arm, trade his baskets, rest awhile, and then start home.

Farmers who had taken beef hides to the tanyard would bring hides to Alex Ferguson in New Salem, and give Alex the foot measures of the family; William Sampson, a farmer with a big family, used to come after his shoes with a two-bushel sack and take a dozen pairs home. There was Granny Spears of Clary's Grove, who was so often seen helping at houses where a new baby had come; she had been stolen by Indians when a girl and living with them had heard from them how to use herbs and salves; she was a little dried-up woman whose chin and nose pointed out and curved out till they nearly touched each other.

Uncle Johnny Watkins had a flat stone the size of a dollar, given him by a friend in Pennsylvania. The stone was to cure snake bite. It was laid on the place where the snake had bitten, and clung there soaking the poison out. Then the stone was dropped into sweet milk, which soaked the poison out of the stone, and then again the stone was put on the snake bite; this was kept up till all the poison was drawn out. Some said Uncle Johnny's stone was a sure cure for snake bite; others said corn whisky was better.

Here and there the question was asked, "Who is this Abe Lincoln?" In Menard County one story was told about how Lincoln came to New Salem and what happened. The boys in and around New Salem had sized up Abe, as they called him, and decided to see what stuff he had in him. First, he was to run a foot race with a man from Wolf. "Trot him out," said Abe. Second, he was to wrestle with a man from Little Grove. "All right," said Abe. Third, he must fight a man from Sand Ridge. "Nothing wrong about that," said Abe. The foot-racer from Wolf couldn't pass Abe. The man from Little Grove, short and heavy, stripped for action, ran at Abe like a battering-ram. Abe stepped aside, caught his man by the nape of the neck, threw him heels over head, and gave him a fall that nearly broke the bones. Abe was now

getting mad. "Bring on your man from Sand Ridge," he hooted. "I can do him up in three shakes of a sheep's tail, and I can whip the whole pack of you if you give me ten minutes between fights." But a committee from the boys came up, gave him the right hand of fellowship and told him, "You have sand in your craw and we will take you into our crowd."

Thus one story was beginning to be told of how Lincoln had arrived in Illinois and what manner of man he was. Henry Onstott and others were telling the story, just like that.

32

In the winter of 1832, a steamboat was advertised to leave Cincinnati and sail on the four rivers necessary to reach New Salem by water route. Her name was classical, the *Talisman*; her owners hoped she had a magic charm. At the post office in New Salem, at the gristmill and the sawmill, at the wrestling matches, hoedowns, shindigs and chicken fights, the big talk was about that steamboat coming from Cincinnati. She had started down the Ohio going west, she had turned up the Mississippi running north, and in spite of fogs, rain, and floating ice-jams, she had twisted into the channel of the Illinois River and arrived at Beardstown in April.

As a sporting event it was interesting that she came through that far as a winner. As a business event it was important; after she turned into the Sangamon River and unloaded part of a cargo at Springfield, the stores there advertised arrival of goods "direct from the East per steamer *Talisman*." Storekeepers and land-buyers along the Sangamon were excited; if the steamer made all its connections and its plans worked out, then the Sangamon prairie valley would have direct water-route connections with Cincinnati and Pittsburgh; land and business values would go booming. It was a matter aside that the steamer captain, Bogue, had sent a dude captain to command the boat and this deck officer had worried the women of Springfield by bringing along a flashily dressed woman not his wife, and both of them were drunk and loose-tongued at a reception and dance in the county courthouse tendered by the ladies and gentlemen of Springfield. A lawyer in Springfield wrote in the *Sangamo Journal*, getting some of the atmosphere of the river events in these two verses to be sung to the tune of "Clar de Kitchen":

Now we are up the Sangamo,
And here we'll have a grand hurra,
So fill your glasses to the brim,
Of whisky, brandy, wine, and gin.

Illinois suckers, young and raw,
Were strung along the Sangamo,
To see a boat come up by steam,
They sure thought it was a dream.

She steamed up the river past New Salem, and tied up at Bogue's Mill. After the high waters of spring had gone down, making a narrower river

and shallower channel, she started on her trip downstream. In charge as pilot the boat officers had put Abe Lincoln; he sat by and listened as the boat was stopped at the New Salem dam and the boat officers quarreled with the dam owners, Cameron and Rutledge, about whether they could tear a hole so as to run the boat through. At last a rip was made through the dam, the boat made the passage downstream, and everybody concerned said it must happen never again. The lawyer, writing verses down at Springfield, tried to cover it with this rhyme:

And when we came to Salem dam,
Up we went against it jam.
We tried to cross with all our might,
But found we couldn't and staid all night.

It was a serio-comic chapter, one of many, in the struggles of western pioneer communities for outlets, transportation, connections with the big outside world, to bring more people to the prairies, and to sell crops and produce to the East in exchange for hardware and nails; there were as yet more houses and wagons held together by wooden pegs and cleats than by iron nails and spikes.

On a ridge the other side of Green's Rocky Branch, a creek south of New Salem, stood a log schoolhouse, where Lincoln occasionally dropped in to sit on a bench and listen to the children reciting their lessons to Mentor Graham, the tall, intellectual, slant-jawed school-teacher. He wanted to find out how much he already knew of what they were teaching in the schools. And he spent hours with Mentor Graham going over points in mathematics, geography, grammar, and correct language. The words "education" and "knowledge" were often on his lips when he talked with thoughtful people; they referred to him as "a learner." He called himself that, "a learner." The gift of asking questions intelligently, listening to the answers, and then pushing quietly on with more questions, until he knew all that could be told to him, or all there was time for—this gift was his. "He could pump a man dry on any subject he was interested in."

In the month of March, 1832, he launched forth into an action that took as much nerve as wrestling Jack Armstrong the year before. He had just passed his twenty-third year, had for the first time in his life read through a grammar, was out of a job, and, except for a few months as a grocery clerk, he still classified as a workingman or a propertyless manual laborer. And he announced that he was going to run for the office of member of the legislature of the state of Illinois, to represent the people of Sangamon County in the chief law-making body of the state. He told friends he didn't expect to be elected; it was understood that James Rutledge and others had told him to make the run; it "would bring him prominently before the people, and in time would do him good." So he took his first big plunge into politics.

In a long speech, later printed as a handbill, he expressed his views about navigation of the Sangamon River and railroad transportation as compared with rivers and canals. Having floated boats and cargoes some four thousand

miles in four years, he felt at home in discussing water transportation. A railroad connecting Sangamon County with other parts of Illinois, was, he said, "indeed, a very desirable object," but the cost, \$290,000, he pointed out, "forces us to shrink from our pleasing anticipations." Then he analyzed the geography of the Sangamon River, argued for improvements in its channel, and pledged himself to support all measures for such improvements.

He declared, "I think I may say, without the fear of being successfully contradicted, that its navigation may be rendered completely practicable as high as the mouth of the South Fork." Next, he called for a strong law to stop "the practice of loaning money at exorbitant rates of interest," and declared that cases of greatest necessity may arise when the evasion of laws is justifiable. His four closing sentences on this subject were: "A law for this purpose [fixing the limits of usury], I am of the opinion, may be made without materially injuring any class of people. In cases of extreme necessity, there could always be means found to cheat the law; while in all other cases it would have its intended effect. I would favor the passage of a law on this subject which might not very easily be evaded. Let it be such that the labor and difficulty of evading it could only be justified in cases of greatest necessity."

Some of the wishes of his heart were spoken in a paragraph saying: "Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance, even on this account alone, to say nothing of the advantages and satisfaction to be derived from all being able to read the Scriptures, and other works both of a religious and moral nature, for themselves."

And as connected therewith, he added, "For my part, I desire to see the time when education—and by its means, morality, sobriety, enterprise, and industry—shall become much more general than at present." He closed in a manner having the gray glint of his eyes and the loose hang of his long arms, "If the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

33

One morning in April, when the redbud was speaking its first pink whispers, and the dandelions scattered butter colors in long handfuls over the upland bull-grass, a rider on a muddy, sweating horse stopped in New Salem and gave out handbills signed by the governor of the state calling for volunteer soldiers to fight Indians. The famous old red man, Black Hawk, had crossed the Mississippi River with the best fighters in the Sac tribe, to have a look at land where they and theirs had planted corn, also a burying-ground at the mouth of the Rock River where their fathers and mothers of far back were buried.

For hundreds of years, the Sac tribe had hunted and fished in the rich prairie valley of the Rock River, and among the rocky hills and bluffs of northwestern Illinois; in the time of the falling leaves and the ghost shapes of the hazes of Indian summer, they had piled harvest corn in their little villages, and told the Great Spirit, Man-ee-do, with songs, dances, and prayers, they were thankful it was a good corn year. After they had seen the frost and wind take the last of the yellow leaves off the haw trees and hazel bushes, they sat around winter fires in their deerskin shelters with buffalo robes to cover them if the blizzard winds blew snow inside; they heard their fathers and mothers tell why the rabbit has a short tail, where the rattlesnake got its rattles and the gopher its stripes, how the first corn and beans came, when and how the wind was first let loose into the sky and sent roaming, who made the foot tracks of that thin snowdrift trail of the Milky Way of stars shining on the winter sky, who makes the war drums of the sky thunderstorms, who the strong and watchful spirits are in other worlds up over and down under the prairie world.

The land of their stories, their corn-planting and harvest, their hunting and fishing places, the burying ground of their fathers who had fought for its possession as against other tribes, had passed from under their feet. In the year 1804, they sold their corner in northwestern Illinois to the United States Government, with the promise on paper, a sheet of writing, saying that they could hunt and could plant corn in Illinois till the lands were surveyed and opened up for settlers.

Then they had taken their horses, women, children, and dogs across the Mississippi River. And now they were saying the white men had broken the written promises; white squatters had come fifty miles past the line of settlement; and more than that, the United States Government could not buy land because land cannot be sold. "My reason teaches me," wrote Black Hawk, "that land cannot be sold. The Great Spirit gave it to his children to live upon. So long as they occupy and cultivate it they have the right to the soil. Nothing can be sold but such things as can be carried away."

Black Hawk was now sixty-seven years old and could look back on forty years as a chief of the Sac tribe. On his blanket was a blood-red hand, the sign that he had killed and scalped an enemy when he was a fifteen-year-old boy. In his time he had straddled his pony and helped other Indian tribes and had joined hands with British soldiers in fighting back the tide of American settlers; he had seen the red man drink the fire water of the white man and then sign papers selling land. Now he felt the Great Spirit, "Man-ee-do! Man-ee-do!" telling him to cross the Mississippi River, scare and scatter the squatters and settlers, and then ambush and kill off all the pale-faced soldiers who came against him.

The voices of his fathers said, "Go." The Fox, Winnebago, Sioux, Kickapoo, and other tribes had sent word they would join him in driving out the pale-faces. Already his young men on fast ponies had circled among settlers around Rock Island and along the Rock River, leaving cabins in ashes and white men and women with their scalps torn out. And Black Hawk himself was leading

his paint-face warriors, with strings of eagle feathers down their heads and shoulders, with rifles and tomahawks, up the Rock River valley, telling settlers, "We come to plant corn," saying also, "Land cannot be sold." Copper-faced men had tumbled off their horses with the rifle bullets of white men in their vitals; white men had wakened in their cabins at night to hear yells, to see fire and knives and war-axes burn and butcher.

Across all northern Illinois any strange cry in the night sent shivers of terror to the white people in their lonely cabins. Men on horses picked for speed rode to the governor at Springfield and asked for help.

The Washington government, a thousand miles away, was sending the pick of its young regulars to handle the revolt of the Indian chief who would sell land and afterward raise the point that land cannot be sold. Sons of Alexander Hamilton and Daniel Boone were helping young commanders named Albert Sidney Johnston, Zachary Taylor, and Winfield Scott. The white civilization of firearms, printed books, plows, and power-looms was resolved on a no-compromise war with the redskin civilization of spears, eagle feathers, buffalo dances, and the art and tradition of the ambush.

And now over the rolling prairie and the slopes of timber bottoms along the Rock River, with a measureless blue sky arching over them, the red man and the white man hunted each other, trying to hand crimson death to each other. As they hunted they measured small and were hard to see, each trying to hide from the other till the instant of clash, combat, and death—bipeds stalking each other; only keen eyes could spot the pieces of the action and put together the collective human movement that swerved, struck, faded, came again, and struck, in the reaches of rolling prairie and slopes of timber bottom where the green, rain-washed bushes and trees stood so far, so deep under the arch of a measureless blue sky.

The Indians shaped and reshaped their army as a shadow, came and faded as a phantom, spread out false trails, mocked their enemy with being gone from horizons they had just filled. An ambush was their hope. They tried for it and couldn't get it. The white men had fought Indians before and had solved the theory of warfare by ambush.

By zigzag and crisscross paths, with the Sacs and Foxes the only tribes fighting, Black Hawk was driven north out of Illinois and, in swamp and island battles on the Wisconsin and Bad Axe rivers, his armies were beaten and his last chance taken. On a willow island in the Bad Axe River, his men tried to hold off the whites who came wading in muddy water to their arm-pits, who took the island and shot the swimming Indians trying to get away to a west shore. Fifty prisoners only were taken, mostly squaws and children.

Black Hawk did not know then that the white men had ambushed him by a white man's way of ambush, that Sioux and Winnebago Indians acting as guides for his army were in the pay of the whites and had led his army on wrong roads. It was these same red men who were paid by the whites to bring him in as a prisoner after he escaped from the battle on the Bad Axe.

And Black Hawk was taken a thousand miles to Washington, where at the White House he met President Andrew Jackson. They faced each other, a

white chief and red chief; both had killed men and known terrible angers, hard griefs, high dangers, and scars; each was nearly seventy years old; and Black Hawk said to Jackson, "I—am—a man—and you—are—another."

And he explained himself: "I took up the hatchet to avenge injuries which could no longer be borne. Had I borne them longer my people would have said, 'Black Hawk is a squaw; he is too old to be a chief; he is no Sac.' This caused me to raise the war-whoop. I say no more of it; all is known to you."

Abraham Lincoln had two reasons, if no more, for going into the Black Hawk War as a volunteer soldier. His job as a clerk would soon be gone, with no Offut store to clerk in. And he was running for the legislature; a war record, in any kind of war, would count in politics. He enlisted, and Jack Armstrong and the Clary's Grove Boys said they were going to elect him captain of the company. They ran him against a sawmill owner named Kirkpatrick, who had one time cheated Lincoln out of two dollars.

Kirkpatrick had hired Lincoln to move logs, and agreed that because he didn't supply a tool known as a cant hook, he would pay Lincoln an extra two dollars for doing the heavier work without a cant hook. On pay day the two dollars wasn't paid. Now the Clary's Grove Boys said, "We'll fix Kirkpatrick."

The two candidates, Lincoln and Kirkpatrick, stood facing the company of recruited soldiers, and each soldier walked out and stood behind the man he wanted for captain. Lincoln's line was twice as long as Kirkpatrick's.

He was now Captain Lincoln, and made a speech thanking the men for the honor, saying the honor was unexpected, the honor was undeserved, but he would do his best to merit the confidence placed in him. After that he appointed Jack Armstrong first sergeant, with plenty of other sergeants and corporals from among the Clary's Grove Boys.

But Kirkpatrick, too, was promoted from the ranks, just nine days after the company was enrolled.

On the muster roll were such names as Obadiah Morgan, Royal Potter, Pleasant Armstrong, Michael Plaster, Isaac Guliher, Robert S. Plunkett, Travice Elmore, Usil Meeker, and Joseph Hoheimer.

Their military unit was officially designated as "Captain Abraham Lincoln's Company of the First Regiment of the Brigade of Mounted Volunteers commanded by Brigadier-General Samuel Whiteside." And though officially they were mounted volunteers, they had no mounts as yet. All were afoot, including Captain Lincoln.

The first military order he gave as captain got the reply, "Go to hell." He knew his company could fight like wildcats but would never understand so-called discipline. Other volunteer companies, also the regular army soldiers and officers, said they were "a hard set of men."

As their captain was drilling them one day with two platoons advancing toward a gate, he couldn't think of the order that would get them endwise, two by two, for passing through the gate. So he commanded, "This com-

pany is dismissed for two minutes, when it will fall in again on the other side of the gate." At Henderson River, with horses swimming the stream, it was a camp rule that no firearms should be discharged within fifty yards of the camp. Somebody shot off a pistol inside the camp; the authorities found it was Captain Lincoln; he was arrested, his sword taken away, and he was held under arrest for one day.

At another time his men opened officers' supplies and found a lot of whisky; on the morning after, the captain and his sergeants had a hard time rousing the men out of their blankets; some were dead drunk, others straggled on the march. A court-martial ordered Captain Lincoln to carry a wooden sword two days.

An old Indian rambled into camp one day. The men rushed at him; they were out in an Indian war, to kill Indians. Lincoln jumped to the side of the Indian, showed the men that the old copper-face had a military pass, and said with a hard gleam, "Men, this must not be done; he must not be shot and killed by us." One of the men called Lincoln a coward, as though he were taking advantage of his men as captain. The gleam in his eyes blazed as he stood by the old Indian and quietly told the mob, "If any man thinks I am a coward, let him test it." There was a cry, "Lincoln, you're bigger and heavier than we are," and the answer came like a shot, "You can guard against that—choose your weapons!" And the hot tempers cooled down and came to an understanding that they had an elemental captain who didn't presume on his authority.

The Sangamon County volunteers were part of an army of 1,600 soldiers mobilized at Beardstown, and marched in cold and drizzly weather across muddy roads to Yellow Banks on the Mississippi, then to Dixon on the Rock River. Sometimes the company cooks had nothing to cook and there was growling from the volunteers; one company refused to cross the line out of Illinois toward the north; Colonel Zachary Taylor, in command, made them a speech saying that some of them would probably be congressmen and go to Washington; they were important citizens of Illinois; but he had his orders from Washington to follow Black Hawk and take the Illinois troops along; behind them he had drawn up lines of regular soldiers; ahead of them were the flatboats to cross the river and leave Illinois; they could take their choice. They decided to get into the flatboats and fight Indians rather than the regular soldiers.

About this same time Captain Lincoln went to the regular army officers of his brigade and told them that, representing his men, he had to say that there would be trouble if his men didn't get the same rations and treatment as the regulars. Bill Green remembered Lincoln saying to a regular army officer: "Sir, you forget that we are not under the rules and regulations of the War Department at Washington; we are only volunteers under the orders and regulations of Illinois. Keep in your own sphere and there will be no difficulty, but resistance will hereafter be made to unjust orders. My men must be equal in all particulars—in rations, arms, camps—to the regular army." And this

threat of mutiny, voiced by the leader of the Clary's Grove Boys, resulted in better treatment, so that no mutiny followed.

Marching from Dixon to the Fox River, the little army camped one night, put its horses to grass, ate bread and fried salt pork, and a short hour after dark was ready for sleep. Suddenly the whole army shook with terror, fire streaked the air, drums and fifes sounded, hoots and yells were on all sides—and running horses. A scare had hit the horses as they cropped the prairie summer grass, some unknown fear, and they had broken in a run across the camp, snorting and cavorting, stepping on corporals and privates stretched out for the night sleep. No enemy Indians were in sight or hearing; but a battle-line was formed, every man clutched his gun—and nothing happened, only they lost a night's sleep.

While they were marching across Knox County, a young white sow joined Lincoln's company as a mascot, marched, swam the creeks, foraged for food, and, when greased by the company cook, slipped loose from those who tried to catch and hold her; she stayed through past Paw Paw Grove to the mouth of the Fox River, where she was butchered to make a Clary's Grove holiday.

While Lincoln's company was quartered near a fort, his men noticed that the officers had plenty of milk from two cows, one stub-tailed. And the men planned to borrow or steal one of the cows, and see what the taste of milk was like. One man rode to a slaughterhouse and came back with a long red cow's tail to match the color of the stub-tailed cow, and it was fastened to the stub-tailed cow, which had been taken from the officers. Then along came the fort commander, saying, "If that cow of yours had a stub tail, I should say it was ours." "But she hasn't got a stub tail, has she?" "No, she certainly has not a stub tail." "Well, she isn't yours then."

The lizard story and all the other stories Lincoln could remember were told around the camp-fires. "That reminds me of a feller down in Indianny," he would open up—and go on. At his hip was the wrestler's handkerchief; champions from neighborhoods in all parts of Illinois tried him out. The Clary's Grove Boys said no man in the army could throw him. This reached the ears of a wrestler named Thompson, who had friends.

A championship match was arranged, and Lincoln's friends bet money, hats, whisky, knives, blankets, and tomahawks. On the day of the match, as the two wrestlers tussled in their first feel-outs of each other, Lincoln turned to his friends and said, "Boys, this is the most powerful man I ever had hold of." For a while Lincoln held him off; then Thompson got the "crotch hoist" on him, and he went under, fairly thrown. The match was for the best two out of three falls.

In the second grapple, Lincoln went to the ground pulling Thompson down with him. It looked like a "dog-fall"; the boys from Clary's Grove swarmed around; an all-round fight seemed next on the program of the day's events, when Lincoln raised his head over the crowd, "Boys"; and in the silence that followed, he said: "Boys, give up your bets. If this man hasn't thrown me fairly, he could."

And his men paid their bets to the last dollar or jackknife or blanket—but still went on claiming it was a dog-fall wrestle, and Lincoln could throw any man in the army. At a later time Lincoln told friends about Thompson: "I never had been thrown in a wrestling match until the man from that company did it. He could have thrown a grizzly bear."

Near Kellogg's Grove Lincoln helped bury five men killed in a skirmish the day before. This was the nearest to actual war combat that he came. He and his men rode up a little hill as the red light of the morning sun streamed over the five corpses. Telling about it afterward, he said each of the dead men "had a round spot on the top of his head about as big as a dollar, where the redskins had taken his scalp." He said it was frightful, grotesque, "and the red sunlight seemed to paint everything all over."

When his company of volunteers was mustered out, he enlisted again, serving as a private till his term was up. At Whitewater, Wisconsin, his horse was stolen and he walked to Peoria, Illinois, resting his long shanks if a comrade on a horse let him ride a mile.

Crops had gone to waste that year of Indian fighting in northern Illinois; food was scarce; Lincoln and the returning soldiers lived on corn meal mixed with water baked over a fire in rolls of bark.

They bought a canoe at Peoria, paddled the Illinois River to Havana, sold the canoe, and walked back to good old New Salem, where there was a dry place to sleep.

So, Abe Lincoln had been through an Indian war without killing an Indian, and having saved the life of one Indian. He had seen deep into the heart of the American volunteer soldier; he had fathomed a thousand reasons why men go to war, march in the mud, sleep in cold rain, and kill when the killing is good. In the depths of his own heart there were slow changes at work; a slant of light had opened when he was elected captain; it had made him glad; it had softened and lit up shadows that floated around him sometimes in a big dark room alone with his thoughts, alone with ghosts and faded dreams that went as far back as Nancy Hanks and the lonely grave where they laid her in early winter so long ago; and, if he could be a captain of men who chose him for captain as they were going to war, he might perhaps have two hopes where before he had had only one or none at all; he might perhaps make a less desperate figure at the door of the house where the girl lived with light corn-silk hair framing a pink-fair face.

He had spent long hours talking with a volunteer from Springfield, Major John T. Stuart, who was a lawyer and had told him he could be a lawyer. Reading a tough grammar through hadn't stumped him; maybe reading law would be the same; maybe he would suddenly find himself a lawyer making speeches to the court and jury, just as he suddenly had found himself captain of a company of Sangamon County volunteers going to an Indian war.

Life seemed to be a series of doors that open and shut and with no telling beforehand which door is to be shut with its "No! No!" and which door is to swing open with a "Welcome! I was waiting for you!"

34

Election Day was to be August 6, and, after reaching New Salem and washing off the Black Hawk War mud from his rawhide boots, Lincoln started electioneering and kept it up till the ballots were counted. He traveled over Sangamon County with his long frame wrapped in flax and tow-linen pantaloons, a mixed jean coat, claw-hammer style, short in the sleeves, and bobtail, "so short in the tail he could not sit on it"; a straw hat topped the long frame. To the reading and educated public, a small fraction, he gave the arguments in his long address, written in the spring, on Sangamon River navigation, a usury law, and education.

Mixing with the voters known as "the butcher-knife boys," who carried long knives in the belts of their hunting-shirts, he had the lizard story and others to tell, besides all the fresh jokes and horsy adventures by night and day in the Black Hawk War. His first stump speech was at Pappville, when the auctioneers, Poog & Knap, were selling hogs, bulls, and steers to the highest bidders.

As Lincoln stepped on a box, ready to say "Gentlemen and fellow citizens," and make his speech, he saw several fellow citizens on the edge of the crowd planting their fists in each other's faces, rushing and mauling. He noticed one of his own friends getting the worst of it, stepped off the box, shouldered his way to the fight, picked a man by the scruff of the neck and the seat of the breeches, and threw him ten feet for a fall. Then he walked back to his box, stepped up, swept the crowd with his eyes in a cool way as though what had happened sort of happened every day, and then made a speech, which Bill Green recalled afterward in these words:

"Gentlemen and fellow citizens: I presume you all know who I am. I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by many friends to become a candidate for the legislature. My politics are short and sweet, like the old woman's dance. I am in favor of a national bank. I am in favor of the internal-improvements system and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same."

This was speech as plain and straight as if he were telling a horse-race or chicken-fight crowd which way to pay their bets. In standing for a national bank, high tariff, and internal improvements, he was lining up with the Henry Clay crowd rather than the Jackson men. At that hour in Illinois politics, the large majority of voters were Jackson men, either "whole-hog" or "nominal"; the real regular, hot whole-hog Jackson men said, "All Whigs ought to be whipped out of office like dogs out of a meat house."

In campaigning among farmers, Lincoln pitched hay at the barns and cradled wheat in the fields to show the gang he was one of 'em; at various crossroads he threw the crowbar and let the local wrestlers try to get the crotch hoist on him. At one town a doctor, who had heard about Lincoln, asked Row Herndon, "Can't the party raise no better material than that?" but after

hearing a stump speech from the young candidate, he told Herndon, "He is a take-in, knows more than all of them put together."

A judge, Stephen T. Logan, heard his Springfield speech and commented: "He was tall, gawky, rough-looking; his pantaloons didn't meet his shoes by six inches. But I became very much interested in him; he made a very sensible speech. He had novelty and peculiarity in presenting his ideas; he had individuality."

On Election Day Lincoln lost, standing seventh from the highest of twelve candidates.

But in his own neighborhood, the New Salem precinct where the poll-books showed 300 votes cast, he got 277 of those votes.

35

Lincoln was now out of a job, and had his choice of learning the blacksmith trade or going into business. He drifted into business; friends took his promissory notes.

Five stores were running in New Salem, and somehow, after a time, three of the stores, or the wrecks and debts of them, passed into Lincoln's hands.

He and William F. Berry, the son of a Presbyterian minister, bought out the Herndon Brothers and hung up the sign Berry & Lincoln. Also they bought the stock of Reuben Radford's store.

It happened Radford passed threatening words with the Clary's Grove Boys, and one day went away from the store telling his younger brother that if the Clary's Grove Boys came in they should have two drinks apiece and no more. The boys came, took their two drinks, stood the young clerk on his head, helped themselves at the jugs and barrels, wrecked the store, broke the windows, and rode away yelling on their ponies.

When Radford came back and looked the store over, he was discouraged, and sold the stock to Bill Green, who sold it at a profit to Berry & Lincoln. On top of these stocks, they bought out the little grocery of James Rutledge.

As the store of Berry & Lincoln ran on through the fall and winter, business didn't pick up much, and nobody cared much. Berry was drinking and playing poker; Lincoln was reading law and learning Shakespeare and Burns.

Early harvest days came; the oat straw ripened to cream and gold; the farmers bundled the grain in the russet fields. From the Salem hilltop, the prairie off toward Springfield lifted itself in a lazy half-world of harvest haze; the valley of the Sangamon River loitered off in a long stretch of lazy, dreamy haze.

The tawny and crimson sunsets faded off into purple lines of prairie haze; the harvest moon, in a wash of pumpkin colors, lifted its balloon float over silver prairie haze; in the harvest days the prairie kept its horizons in haze.

For Abraham Lincoln these were haze and horizon days. Mornings and afternoons went by with few customers to bother him. He had never in his life sat so free with so many uninterrupted thoughts, so footloose day after day to turn and look into himself and find the measure of his personal hori-

zons, to let dark, vivid roots take deeper root in their clutch and climb for the sun.

All the insides of him that could be nourished by hard work and steady chores had seen their days in plenty. Now he was having, for once, the days that might nourish by letting him sit still and get at himself, by letting him lean a moment at his door lintels and feel the flow and the slow drive of his deeper channels.

He had a keen, tenacious memory; he could review, with immensity of fact and impression, all the panoramas and sketches of his past years; and on this record he could turn the scrutiny of a developing and sharpening eye of analysis. He was growing as inevitably as summer corn in Illinois loam, when its stalks thicken as it lifts ears heavier with juices, and longer with its dripping tassels of brown silk. Leaning at the porch-posts of a store to which fewer customers were coming, he was growing, in silence, as corn grows.

A mover came by, heading west in a covered wagon. He sold Lincoln a barrel. Lincoln afterward explained, "I did not want it, but to oblige him I bought it, and paid him half a dollar for it." Later, emptying rubbish out of the barrel, he found books at the bottom, Blackstone's "Commentaries on the Laws of England."

By accident, by a streak of luck, he was owner of the one famous book that young men studying law had to read first of all; it had sneaked into his hands without his expecting it; he remembered his Springfield lawyer-friend, John T. Stuart, saying the law student should read Blackstone first.

He remembered how he walked barefoot to the courthouse at Booneville down in Indiana and heard a "distinguished" lawyer make a speech to a jury with logic, sarcasm, and tears, and how he wished deep wishes he might some day be a lawyer like that. And now the book, Blackstone's Commentaries, had jumped into his hands out of an empty barrel, as if to say, "Take me and read me; you were made for a lawyer."

So he read Blackstone, the book of lectures delivered by Sir William Blackstone at Oxford, England, in 1753. Laws derive their validity from their conformity to the so-called law of nature or law of God. The objects of law are rights and wrongs. Rights are either rights of persons or rights of things. Wrongs are either public or private. And so on, read Lincoln, on the flat of his back on the grocery-store counter, or under the shade of a tree with his feet up the side of the tree. One morning he sat barefoot on a woodpile, with a book. "What are you reading?" asked Squire Godby. "I ain't reading; I'm studying." "Studying what?" "Law." "Good God Almighty!"

Jack Kelso came with gypsy ways, and Shakespeare and Burns on his tongue. He drew Lincoln to him with talk; they were chums. Lincoln hated fishing, yet he went to the river and spent hours listening while Kelso talked and fished. It was said that when other men in New Salem got drunk they wanted to fight, but Jack Kelso recited Shakespeare and Burns. To Kelso those poets were not books so much as faces, breaths of life; their meanings could be found in Sangamon County. Some of Clary's Grove was in the verse of Burns:

"O Willie, come sell your fiddle,
O sell your fiddle sae fine;
O Willie, come sell your fiddle,
And buy a pint o' wine!"

"If I should sell my fiddle,
The warld would think I was mad;
For monie a rantin' day
My fiddle and I hae had."

They sat along quiet river-banks where the waters were living and the fish bit; they asked: "Who am I? What is a man or a woman? Who is God? Where do we go from here?" Kelso watched his bobber and line, and discussed such things from Shakespeare as a king's skull at the bottom of the sea with pearls grown in its green eyesockets, or a queen haunted by a murder, trying to wash a blood-spot off her hand, moaning, "Out, out, damned spot."

And Lincoln, with his heart drawn to this vagabond who fished and drank corn whisky, went his own way; he couldn't see any sport in fishing nor any health, for him, in whisky. Across the road from the store of Berry & Lincoln was the house of Dr. John Allen, a Presbyterian elder who started the first Sunday school in the village, spoke strong words against Negro slavery, and organized the Washingtonian Society, whose members pledged themselves to drink no intoxicating liquors.

He was an earnest, obstinate, quiet man, was Dr. Allen; and he drew Lincoln to him, by the way he practiced his religion. On Sundays, the doctor had his horse tied in front of the church, with large double-pocketed medicine saddlebags in his church pew, ready for any sick call. In sleet or snow of winter or in the sweltering dog-days of late summer, he went when his patients called; but all money collected for Sunday visits was put in a separate fund to be given to the church or to poor or sick people; house servants or hired hands on farms, he charged only for the price of the medicine. Other towns knew him as a skilled physician; doctors in Springfield and Jacksonville called him into consultations. Unless a patient was well off with property, Dr. Allen never sent a bill. His smoke-house cured hams and bacons with which farmers had paid their doctor's bills; ox-teams hauled the cured meat to Beardstown to be sent by flatboat to St. Louis and New Orleans. He was scorned, hated, and laughed at by some settlers along the Sangamon because he never let up on his steady, quiet arguments against slavery and whisky.

Even the Hard-shell Baptist church was not then ready to take a stand against whisky. When Mentor Graham, the schoolmaster, joined the temperance reform movement, the church trustees suspended him. Then, to hold a balance and hand out even justice all around, the trustees suspended another church member who had gone blind drunk. This action puzzled one member, who stood up and took from his pocket a quart bottle half full, which he shook till it bubbled, as he drawled: "Brethering, you have turned one member out beca'se he would not drink, and another beca'se he got drunk, and

now I wants to ask a question. How much of this 'ere critter does a man have to drink to remain in full fellership in this church?"

Dr. Allen had a close friend in John Berry, the Cumberland Presbyterian preacher, and father of Lincoln's partner in the firm of Berry & Lincoln. Rev. Mr. Berry's arguments against whisky reached deep into Lincoln's life. At this time he was watching what whisky could do in the case of his business partner, who was physically going to wreck. He could name homes where the children were afraid of the father coming home, where crops had been lost, where the mothers had learned to take comfort from the bottle, and babies were put to sleep with wild corn-juice. Lincoln came to understand why earnest, obstinate men like Dr. Allen and Rev. Mr. Berry should go on as they did, never letting up on their argument against whisky.

Whisky seemed to be making his business partner useless. Lincoln ran the store alone. The name of "Honest Abe" was sticking. One winter morning a farmer, Harvey Ross, asked for a pair of buckskin gloves. Lincoln threw him a pair of gloves and said they were dogskin, good gloves, and 75 cents for the pair. Ross said he never had heard of dogskin gloves; they had always been deerskin. He asked if Lincoln was sure they were dogskin. The answer was: "I'll tell you how I know. Jack Clary's dog killed Tom Watkins's sheep, and Tom Watkins's boy killed the dog; old John Mounts tanned the dogskin, and Sally Spears made the gloves. That's the way I know they're dogskin."

Business dropped off; customers got scarcer. Berry & Lincoln took out a license in March, 1833, to keep a tavern and sell retail liquors. Their license specified that they could sell whisky at 12½ cents a pint, and French brandy, peach and apple brandies, Holland and domestic gins, and wine and rum, at various other prices.

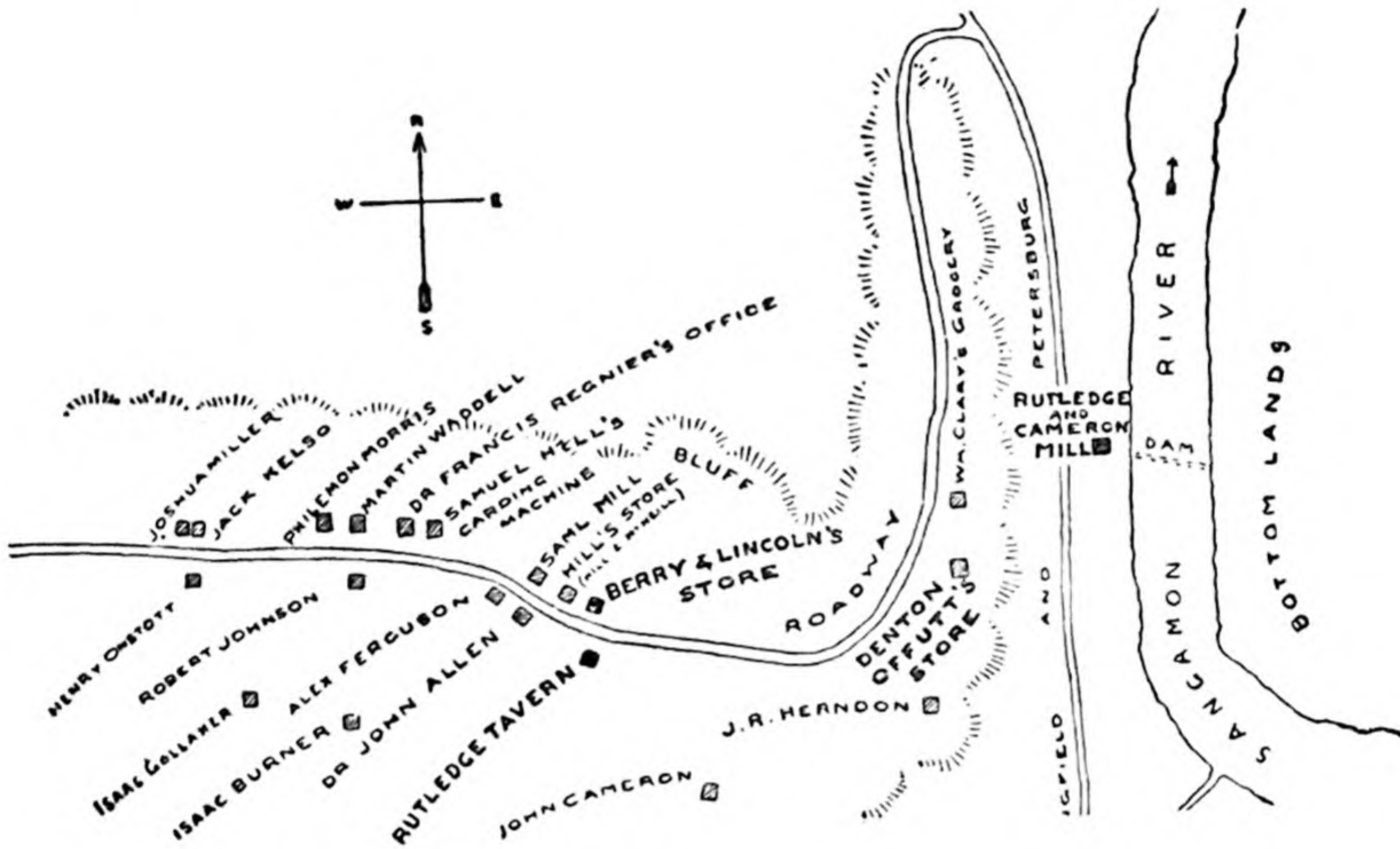
He was learning to be careful about signing notes to pay stipulated sums at future dates. While he was jingling in his jeans the forty dollars paid him for piloting the steamer *Talisman*, he signed with Nelson Alley a note for \$104.87½—"for the benefit of the creditors of V. A. Bogue," the note read. A Springfield lawyer, George Forquer, sued and won judgment against Lincoln and Alley that year of 1833.

In May, Lincoln was appointed postmaster; no Democrat cared for the office; but Lincoln wanted to read the newspapers. The four-horse "mud-wagon" brought most of the mail; the postmaster carried all the letters in his hat till they were called for. He came to know people always asking for a letter, and acting as though the Government was holding back a letter from them. It was here, a report ran, he met the Irishman who asked, "Is there a letter for me?" "What is the name?" "Oh, begorry, an' ye'll find the name on the letter!" He read the newspapers, kept in touch with St. Louis and Louisville and Cincinnati. "Howdy, Jack?" he would say to Jack Kelso, tell him the news, and then hear Kelso talk about Shakespeare and Burns. Some days he locked up the store for a couple of hours on an afternoon to go down to the river and listen while Kelso fished and talked.

He read in newspapers such oddities as why Lieutenant-Governor William Kinney had used the little "i" in his writings; Kinney said that Governor

Edwards had used up all the capital "I's," leaving him only the small "i's." And when Kinney ran for governor and his friends were mentioning his humble beginnings, the *Kaskaskia Democrat* queried and replied, "Why should Mr. Kinney be elected governor? Because he plowed in his shirt-tail."

As postmaster of New Salem Lincoln either was too careless or didn't have the heart to force newspaper subscribers to pay postage in advance, as the Government regulations required. And when George Spears sent postage money to Lincoln by a messenger somewhat loaded with corn juice, he wrote a note



Map of New Salem.

Drawn by J. McCann Davis and loaned by Ida M. Tarbell

telling Lincoln he wanted a receipt. Lincoln replied he was "surprised" at the request. "The law requires Newspaper postage to be paid in advance and now that I have waited a full year you choose to wound my feelings by intimating that unless you get a receipt I will probably make you pay again."

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More and more often it happened the store of Berry & Lincoln was locked for the day; customers went to other stores; Lincoln took jobs splitting fence-rails, worked at the sawmill, harvested hay and oats, and helped out when there was a rush of customers at the store of Samuel Hill. He now saw that honesty and hard work are not enough in order to win respect as a merchant; he didn't have the trader's nose for business; he lacked the gumption to locate where trade had to come and then to use customers so they would come back. The store was a goner. "It winked out."

And Lincoln was reading books about famous ruins of large enterprises, Volney's "The Ruins of Empire" and Gibbon's "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Also, Thomas Paine's "The Age of Reason." He was out of

a job, with debts. Misery and melancholy he had learned to stand against; he could chase them away with a few comic stories told to the boys. But debts—they wouldn't laugh away.

No matter how he forgot himself and laughed through his lean ribs with the ins and outs of new gay stories—after all was over and he was alone, there were the debts. They were little rats, a rat for every dollar, and he could hear them gnawing in the night when he wanted to sleep.

He had one possession: many friends. One of them was John Calhoun, a Jackson Democrat, surveyor of Sangamon County, who sent word he would like to appoint Lincoln his deputy. Lincoln walked twenty miles to Springfield, and fixed the point clear with Calhoun that he could speak as he pleased, and was not tied up politically, if he took the job.

As he walked back to New Salem he saw ahead of him a tough piece of work to husk out; he had to transform his blank ignorance of the science and art of surveying into a thorough working knowledge and skill.

As he hiked along the low hills of prairie overlooking the Sangamon, it happened that Mrs. Calhoun, back in Springfield, was telling her husband she had never seen such an ungodly-looking gawk as the caller that day. He puzzled her. To which her husband offered the reply, "For all that, he is no common man."

With a copy of "The Theory and Practice of Surveying," by Robert Gibson, published in 1814, Lincoln hunted up Mentor Graham, the schoolmaster, and settled down to gain the knack of surveying. Many nights Graham's daughter woke up at midnight, she told friends, and saw Lincoln and her father by the fire, figuring and explaining.

On some nights Lincoln worked alone till daylight. The sleep he took was in short stretches. The work wore him down. Bowling Green and Jack Armstrong told him to take care of himself.

From decimal fractions the book ran on into logarithms, the use of mathematical instruments, trigonometry, operating the chain, circumferentor, surveying by intersections, changing the scale of maps, leveling, and the General Method, also the Pennsylvania Method, for mensuration of areas.

Lincoln was fagged, with sunken cheeks and bleary, red eyes; friends said he looked exactly like a hard drinker on a spree that has lasted two or three weeks.

On page 300, the book said, "There are three different Horizons, the apparent, the sensible, and the true. The apparent or visible Horizon is the utmost apparent view of the sea or land. The sensible is a plane passing through the eye of an observer, perpendicular to a plumb line hanging freely. And the true or rational Horizon is a plane passing through the center of the Earth, parallel to the sensible Horizon." Also, "The Ecliptic is that great circle in which the annual revolution of the Earth round the Sun is performed."

"You're killing yourself," good people told Lincoln; and among themselves they whispered it was too sad; he would break under the load and come forth shattered.

In six weeks' time, however, Lincoln had mastered his books, the chain,

the circumferentor, the three Horizons, and Calhoun put him to work on the north end of Sangamon County. The taste of open air and sun healed him as he worked in field and timberland with compass and measurements. Winter came on and his fibers toughened.

In January, 1834, Russel Godbey paid him two buckskins for work done. As there was no other job ahead then, he took them to Hannah Armstrong, the wife of Jack, and while Lincoln rocked the baby's cradle and told the Armstrong children stories to chuckle over, Hannah sewed the buckskins on the inner, lower part of his trousers, "foxed his pants," as the saying was, so that between ankles and knees he would have leather protection in briers and brush. He and Hannah sort of adopted each other; he was one of her boys; she talked to him with snapping lights in her eyes; she reminded him of Sally Bush, though she had a different religion. Jack Armstrong and Jack Kelso went along as helpers on surveying trips; one of the Jacks could tell about all the fights and wrestling matches for years back in that part of Illinois; the other Jack was full of Shakespeare and Burns.

For his surveying Lincoln was paid three dollars a day—when he worked. Yet he saw that even with the best of luck it would be a long time before he could pay the \$1,100.00 he was owing. Berry, his store partner, was dead, was through battling with whisky; a Rock Creek farmer rode in one day with the news. And the Trent brothers, who had bought with promissory notes what was left of the Berry & Lincoln store, had gone away without leaving their next address; the few groceries in the store were taken by constables in behalf of creditors. So Lincoln at twenty-four years of age had on his hands the airy wrecks and the cold, real debts of three bankrupt stores.

He could go away from New Salem by night, leaving no future address, as the Trent brothers did, as Offut had done, as many others did on the frontier. Or he could stay and stick it out.

He was sued for ten dollars owing on his horse; a friend let him have the ten dollars; the horse was saved. He was sued again, and his horse, saddle, bridle, surveying instruments were taken away. James Short, a Sand Ridge farmer, heard about it; he liked Lincoln as a serious student, a pleasant joker, and a swift cornhusker; he had told people, when Lincoln worked for him, "He husks two loads of corn to my one."

Short went to the auction, bought in the horse and outfit for \$125.00, and gave them back to Lincoln, who said, "Uncle Jimmy, I'll do as much for you sometime." Lincoln had stayed away from the auction, too sad to show up. And when Short came along with his horse, saddle, bridle, compass, and all, it hit him as another surprise in his life.

He noticed these surprises kept coming regularly into his young life. It was a surprise when Gentry asked him to take a flatboat down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, when Offut picked him to clerk in a new store, when the Sangamon River boys elected him captain for the Black Hawk War, when James Rutledge and others told him he ought to run for the legislature, when New Salem voted for him and it was nearly unanimous, and again now when

Uncle Jimmy Short, without saying anything about it beforehand, came in at the last dark moment with his horse and surveying outfit.

It seemed as though he planned pieces of his life to fit together into personal designs as he wanted. Then shapes and events stepped out of the unknown and kicked his plans into other lines than he expected, and he was left holding a sack, wondering just what it was he wanted.

When dreams came in sleep, he tried to fathom their shapes and reckon out events in the days to come. Beyond the walls and handles of his eyesight and touch, he felt other regions, out and away in the stuff of stars and dreams.

If a blizzard stopped blowing and the wind went down, with the white curve of a snow floor over Salem Hill looking up to a far blue scoop of winter stars blinking white and gold, with loneliness whispering to loneliness, a man might look on it and feel organization and testimony in the movement of the immense, relentless hubs and sprockets on the sky.

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As Lincoln boarded round here and there in New Salem, his days and hours were filled with many different occupations besides the work of surveying and politics. As postmaster he was the first in the village to receive and to read the *Sangamo Journal*, published at Springfield, the *Louisville Journal*, the *St. Louis Republican*, and the *Cincinnati Gazette*. He wrote to a firm of publishers: "Your subscriber at this place, John C. Vance, is dead; and no person takes the paper from the office."

He dipped into popular and trashy fiction such as Mrs. Lee Hentz's novels, and stories having such titles as "Cousin Sally Dillard," "Becky Williams' Courtship," "The Down-Easter and the Bull." He was at the barbecue pit when there were roastings, at the ridge south of the old Offut store when there were gander pullings, at the horse races at the west end of the main street, the horses starting or finishing in front of the Berry & Lincoln store. He played marbles with boys and took a hand often at pitching big round flat stones in a game played like quoits or horseshoes.

He worked in cornfields and timbers to earn money needed on top of his surveyor's fees and postmaster's pay. In an off hour one day he took his jack-knife and cut on one side of his ax handle "A. Lincoln" and on the other side "New Salem 1834."

He saw Bab McNab's fancy red rooster get scared of another cock it was pitted against and run rings around the pit, till Bab got so disgusted he jumped in, grabbed the bird by the neck, and threw it off into the air so it lit on a pile of fresh-cut saplings. There the rooster stood up, stretched its neck, flapped its wings, and let out a long cock-a-doodle-doo. And Bab McNab yelled, "Yes, you little son of a gun, you're great on dress parade, but you're not worth a damn in a fight." Surveying near Bobtown, Lincoln put up one evening at the McHenry home, Mrs. McHenry being Nancy, a sister of Jack Armstrong. Her three-year-old girl climbed Lincoln's knee; he asked the mother what was the girl's name; the mother said she hadn't been named yet.

New Salem, Ill.

Nov 3 1835

Mefers

Your subscriber at this place
John C. Vance, is dead; and no
 person takes the paper from the
 office

Respectfully,

A. Lincoln P.M.

Blair & Sons. }

7 30
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Postmaster Lincoln notifies publishers their subscriber is dead and no person takes the paper.

and Lincoln could name her, if he pleased. He said, "I name you Parthenia Jane."

When called on, and at times without being called on, Lincoln recited for a crowd of men drying their mittens at the fireplace in the store on a winter afternoon, the ballad of "How St. Patrick Came to Be Born on the Seventeenth of March." Two of its verses were:

On the eighth day of March, as some people say,
 St. Patrick at midnight he first saw the day;
 While others assert 'twas the ninth he was born—
 'Twas all a mistake—between midnight and morn.

Some blamed the baby, some blamed the clock;
 Some blamed the doctor, some the crowing cock,
 With all these close questions sure no one could know
 Whether the babe was too fast or the clock was too slow.

One winter morning he saw the boy, Ab Trent, chopping up the logs of an old stable that had been pulled down. Rags wrapped around Ab's feet took the place of shoes; he told Lincoln he was earning a dollar to buy shoes. Lincoln told him to run to the store and warm his feet. And after a while Lincoln came to the store, handed the boy his ax, and told him to collect the dollar and buy shoes; the wood was chopped. And it happened later that Ab, who was a Democrat, told his friends he was going to vote for Abe Lincoln for the legislature.

And when the poll-books showed that Ab Trent had voted against Lincoln, Ab came to Lincoln with tears in his eyes and said his friends got him drunk and he voted against the way he intended.

One of his best friends was the justice of the peace, Bowling Green, who carried a little round paunch of a stomach in front of him, and was nicknamed "Pot." The squire had a smooth, translucent, fair skin, and an original sense of justice. When John Ferguson sued Jack Kelso, claiming a hog, Ferguson put on the stand two witnesses who swore the hog belonged to him, while Kelso swore it was his. Squire Green gave his decision in favor of Kelso, saying: "The two witnesses we have heard have sworn to a damned lie. I know this shote, and I know he belongs to Jack Kelso."

Bowling Green was acquainted with the statutes and Lincoln spent hours in the Green home talking about the statutes. Nancy Green, the squire's wife, cooked hot biscuit smothered in butter and honey, doughnuts, and cookies, to eat with buttermilk, apples, and sweet cider.

Another friend was Dr. Charles Chandler, who was so busy practicing medicine and stocking his farm that he didn't have time to register a Government title to his land over where he had a cabin and horses in Cass County. A stranger named English, buying land tracts for a Philadelphia capitalist, took dinner with Dr. Chandler and made himself at home.

Late in the afternoon, a few hours after English had gone away, word came to Chandler that English was heading for Springfield to register for himself Dr. Chandler's two 80-acre tracts. Dr. Chandler got on a horse, skirmished among neighbors and raised the cash needed to file his land claims, and started about midnight for Springfield.

In the morning he was twelve miles from Springfield and his horse played out. He was afoot leading the nag when Abe Lincoln on a fresh fast horse came along, listened to a few words from the doctor, jumped off his horse, shortened his stirrups, changed saddlebags on the two horses, and cried: "There, doctor, mount my horse, and leave me yours, and don't let any grass grow under his feet on the way. Leave him at Herndon's stables, where I will have yours sometime today and we'll swap back. I want to get you and your pill-bags and the specie into the land office ahead of that shark. No thanks—just go." So Chandler's title to two 80-acre tracts of land was saved.

A case came up before Squire Samuel Berry at Concord one afternoon which Lincoln heard about, so that he left his surveying and acted as the lawyer for a girl in a bastardy case. Several elderly women whom he knew were put on the witness stand and felt awkward and flustered till Lincoln put them at

ease by calling them "Aunt Polly" or "Aunt Sally" and the given names their homefolks used. In his address to the court, Lincoln's speech likened a man's character in such a case to a piece of white cloth, which, though it became soiled, yet could be washed and hung out in the sun, and by the aid of water, sun, and air would become white again; whereas the character of the girl, who was no more to blame, and in most instances not nearly so much to blame as the man, was like a broken and shattered bottle or glass vase, which could not be restored or made whole again.

Surveying the town of Petersburg, he laid out one street crooked. If he had run it straight and regular, the house of a Jemima Elmore and her family would have been in the street. She was the widow of an old friend who had been a private in Lincoln's company during the Black Hawk War and was farming on a little tract of land with her children.

In those New Salem days of Abraham Lincoln there were some who said he would be a great man, maybe governor of the state, anyhow a great lawyer. And there were others who looked on him as an athlete, an ordinary man, and a homely, awkward joker who felt sad sometimes and showed it.

When he kept store he often held an open book in his hand, reading five or ten minutes, closing the book to wait on a customer or to tell a story, then opening the book and reading in spite of the babblings of the men drying their mittens by the fire. He was seen walking the main street of New Salem reading a book, and, if attracted by a page or paragraph, shuffling slowly to a standstill, pausing for contemplation.

And whereas in former days in Indiana he had hunted company, hungry for human talk and thought of any kind, he found himself now drifting away from people; days came oftener when he wanted hours alone to think his way through the circles and meshes around him. The look on his face, "solemn as a papoose," held in these moods. Part of its tone was in the line of his early verse, "Time, what an empty vapor 'tis!" It was noticed among men that he had two shifting moods, the one of the rollicking, droll story and the one when he lapsed into a gravity beyond any bystander to penetrate.

At one time, while storekeeping, he slept on the counter of the store because the Rutledge tavern was overcrowded. He wore flax and tow-linen pantaloons, no vest, no coat, and one suspender, a calico shirt, tan brogans, blue yarn socks, and a straw hat bound round with no string or band.

The Onstotts took over the Rutledge tavern and had Lincoln for a boarder a year or two. And one of the Onstotts said Lincoln never drank liquor of any kind, never smoked nor chewed tobacco, and the nearest he came to swearing was when, excited, one time he had blurted out, "By Jing!" That was his behavior in the Onstott tavern. He didn't fish or shoot. Though he was the champion wrestler and crowbar thrower, one of his favorite sports was playing marbles with boys.

One morning Lincoln asked Mentor Graham, the schoolteacher, "Graham, what do you think of the anger of the Lord?" to which Graham replied, "I believe the Lord never was angry and never will be; His loving-kindness endures forever; He never changes." Lincoln then brought out a manuscript,

carefully written, arguing that God never gets excited, mad, or angry. It quoted from the Bible, "As in Adam all men die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," and defended the idea of universal salvation.

At that time it was preached from nearly all pulpits that the earth is flat, and below the earth is a pit of fire and brimstone into which an angry God will cast sinners. Against this doctrine of eternal punishment by a God of wrath Lincoln directed the argument of his manuscript. To friends he quoted the line from Burns's "Holy Willie's Prayer": "What! Send one to heaven and ten to hell?" And he had a clear memory of an old man named Glenn over in Indiana who used to say, "When I do good, I feel good; when I do bad, I feel bad."

His voice was tenor in pitch, and managed tunes in a reciting, singsong tone. A song titled "Legacy" was a favorite with groups who heard him substitute his own words "old gray" for the regular words "red grape" in the hymn. The lines were:

When in death I shall calm recline,
Oh, bear my heart to my mistress dear.
Tell her it lived on smiles and wine,
Of brightest hue while it lingered here.

Bid her not shed one tear of sorrow
To sully a heart so brilliant and light;
But balmy drops of the red grape borrow,
To bathe the relict from morn till night.

Jack and Hannah Armstrong, out at Clary's Grove, took him in two and three weeks at a time when he needed a place to eat and sleep. Hannah said, "Abe would come out to our house, drink milk, eat mush, corn-bread and butter, bring the children candy, and rock the cradle while I got him something to eat. I foxed his pants, made his shirts. He would tell stories, joke people, boys and girls at parties. He would nurse babies—do anything to accommodate anybody."

Jack once nailed up a man in a barrel and set the barrel rolling from the top of Salem Hill to the river bank three hundred yards down; and once he nailed up two men, the barrel ran crooked, jumped off an embankment and nearly killed the two men inside. Another time, as he was nailing up old man Jordan, a hard drinker, he explained to Abe Lincoln, "Old man Jordan *agreed* to be rolled down the hill for a gallon of whisky."

Sometimes, Lincoln could tease or coax Jack into another line of fun. When a stranger backed up to a woodpile, took a club and knocked Jack to the ground, there seemed to be a mean fight on hand between the two men. Jack told Lincoln he had called the man a liar and a coward, and Lincoln asked, "If you were a stranger in a strange place and a man called you a liar and a coward, what would you do?" "Whip him, by God!" "Then this man has done no more to you than you would have done to him," Lincoln explained. And Jack insisted on the stranger having a drink with him.

A little frontier drama took place one day which A. Y. Ellis told about in

this way: "I remember of seeing Mr. Lincoln out of temper and laughing at the same time. It was at New Salem. The boys were having a jollification after an election. They had a large fire made of shavings and hemp stalks; and some of the boys made a bet with a fellow I shall call 'Ike,' that he couldn't run his bobtail pony through the fire. Ike took them up, and trotted his pony back about one hundred yards, to give him a good start, as he said. The boys all formed a line on either side, to make way for Ike and his pony. Presently here he come, full tilt, with his hat off; and just as he reached the blazing fire, Ike raised in his saddle for the jump straight ahead; but pony was not of the same opinion, so he flew the track, and pitched poor Ike into the flames. Lincoln saw it and ran to help, saying, 'You have carried this thing far enough.' I could see he was mad, though he could not help laughing himself. The poor fellow was considerably scorched about the head and face. Jack Armstrong took him to the doctor, who shaved his head to fix him up, and put salve on the burn. I think Lincoln was a little mad at Armstrong, and Jack himself was very sorry for it. Jack gave Ike next morning a dram, his breakfast, and a skin cap, and sent him home."

Ellis kept a store where Lincoln helped out on busy days. "He always disliked to wait on the ladies," said Ellis. "He preferred trading with the men and boys, as he used to say. He was a very shy man of ladies. On one occasion, when we boarded at the same log tavern, there came an old lady and her son and three stylish daughters, from the state of Virginia, and stopped there for two or three weeks; and during their stay, I do not remember of Mr. Lincoln ever eating at the same table when they did. I thought it was on account of his awkward appearance and his wearing apparel."

When Ellis was asked about the first time he saw Lincoln, he said, "I was out collecting back tax for General James D. Henry. I went from the tavern down to Jacob Bale's old mill, and then I first saw Lincoln. He was sitting on a saw log talking to Jack and Rial Armstrong and a man by the name of Hoheimer. I shook hands with the Armstrongs and Hoheimer, and was conversing with them a few minutes, when we were joined by my old friend, George Warburton, pretty tight as usual; and he asked me to tell him the old story about Ben Johnson and Mrs. Dale's blue dye, and so on, which I did. And then Jack Armstrong said, 'Lincoln, tell Ellis the story about Governor Sichner, his city-bred son, and his nigger Bob,' which he did, with several others, by Jack's calling for them. I found out then that Lincoln was a cousin of Charley Hanks of Island Grove. I told him I knew his uncle, old Billy Hanks, who lived up on the North Fork of the Sangamon River. He was a very sensible old man; he was father to Mrs. Dillon on Spring Creek; and Charley, Billy, and John were his sons; they were all low-flung, could neither read nor write."

The Rutledge family was serious, pious, though they lived in a tavern, where travelers and strangers ate and talked around a big table, and gathered afterward around the big fireplace with talk not always serious nor pious. In

the big loft of the cabin they had stowed away a dozen sleepers of a night. The Rutledges were not isolated people. They had plenty of company. Yet they were earnest, sober, a little somber.

They sang from a book, "The Missouri Harmony," printed and published by Morgan and Sanxay in Cincinnati. It was "a collection of psalm and hymn tunes, and anthems, from eminent authors: with an introduction to the grounds and rudiments of music," and a supplement of "admired tunes and choice pieces of sacred music."

The preface to the book declared, "Too often does a disgraceful silence prevail in our churches; too often are dissonants and discords substituted for the charms of melody and harmony." It rebuked those who come "into the house of God and sit either with their mouths shut, or grinning at some vain and idle speculation, while the devout worshipers are singing the praises of their Redeemer." An eminent writer was quoted, "The worship in which we most resemble the inhabitants of heaven, is the worst performed on earth."

Learners were instructed: "Each one should sing so soft, as not to drown the teacher's voice; if the teacher's voice cannot be heard, it cannot be imitated." A good voice may be "soon much injured by singing too loud." The advice was italicized: "A cold or cough, all kinds of spirituous liquors, violent exercise, bile upon the stomach, long fasting, the veins overcharged with impure blood, &c., &c., are destructive to the voice; a frequent use of spirituous liquors will speedily ruin the best voice."

Lincoln and Ann Rutledge could read the learned admonition: "There should not be any noise indulged while singing (except the music) as it destroys entirely the beauty of the harmony, and renders the performance (especially to learners) very difficult; and if it is designedly promoted, is nothing less than a proof of disrespect in the singers to the exercise, to themselves who occasion it, and to the Author of our existence."

A dark and moving poetry and music from the religion of the people of Europe two and three hundred years back reached out to take the hearts of the pioneers in the log-cabin tavern, singing by candlelight there in New Salem. They could actually turn to page 65 and find the hymn named "New Salem," with its words:

O Thou in whose presence my soul takes delight,
On whom in affliction I call,
My comfort by day, and my song in the night,
My hope, my salvation, my all.

The human family has a heavy load, "hills of guilt" to carry, during tedious rounds of sluggish years, said the lines of songs. Man is a pilgrim across scorching sands, longing for a cooling stream; a wandering sheep in a howling wilderness, seeking rivers of salvation and pleasant fields of paradise. Shaped in a case of clay, man lives in a babel of loose tongues till the case falls off him, the captive is free, and he is ready to go to hell or to Zion. "In the worship of my God I'll spend my breath," ran one line, and a couplet:

The Jewish wintry state is gone,
The mists are fled, the spring comes on.

There was a promise in the tone of Abe Lincoln telling Ann Rutledge of one attribute of God. It was sung:

While the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.

Englishmen who knew the sea and had been fascinated in contemplating the sea, had written the hymn, "Judgment," of how on the Last Day,

The earth was from her center tossed
And mountains in the ocean lost,
Torn piecemeal by the roaring tide.

"To spend one day with God on earth exceeds a thousand days of mirth." The sky, the unfathom'd deep, the boisterous sea, were a stage whereon man saw the lighted clouds of chariots, storms moving with wings; the heavens had curtains, in the spacious arrangements of the Lord.

In the presence of God's great and terrible panoramas, man was a little trembling shadow who should sing softly:

Teach me the measure of my days,
Thou Maker of my frame,
I would survey life's narrow space,
And learn how frail I am.

A time would come when "the rolling years shall cease to move," when the sky would be taken apart and wrapped as a parchment. In the Worthington hymn on page 62, the recurring lines were, "How feeble is our mortal frame!" and "What dying worms are we, what dying worms are we!" The Windsor hymn on page 66 struck a shrill note:

My God, how many are my fears,
How fast my foes increase!
Their number how it multiplies!
How fatal to my peace.

Flashes of eloquence jutted forth, as in the line, "Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above." Many of the pieces were occupied with the fact that man's life is a short and momentary breath in the world of flesh.

Death, like an overflowing stream,
Sweeps us away; our life's a dream,
An empty tale, a morning flow'r,
Cut down and withered in an hour.

Beauty, youth, wealth are phantoms of folly. They become ripe corn that an inevitable later phantom cuts down with a sickle. "Let us live so in youth

that we blush not in age." The body is feeble, wanders, faints, dies, is released from this vale of tears. "Vain, delusive world, adieu!" So soon will death disrobe us all.

There was occasional jubilation, joy over moments to come when life was over on earth, when the scroll of time was rolled and the region of the timeless, the eternal, was entered. Many a line in "The Missouri Harmony" songbook had the testimony of hands strengthened for living through reverence and humility toward the regions of the invisible, the inscrutable. "Through faith, the glorious telescope, I viewed the worlds above," ran one extravagant metaphor. And there was something to think about in the line, "Not to our worthless names is glory due."

And though Abraham Lincoln had found it easy to master Kirkham's Grammar, saying it wasn't much of a science, and he would like to tackle another one as easy, he made no comment about having mastered "The Missouri Harmony Songbook." Many a line in it, as he held it in his hands at the Rutledge place, had more than a casual reading, lines singing of world illusions, of the dissolving of strong frameworks, of proud men to be "light as a puff of empty air," of the "dear sov'reign whirl of seasons," the melting phantasmagoria of the years. Of these he was kith and kin.

39

When the Illinois legislature met at Vandalia in 1834, one of the sitting members was Abraham Lincoln. He was twenty-five years old, holding his first elective political office, and drawing three dollars a day pay, with privileges of ink, quills, and stationery. The four highest candidates from Sangamon County in the voting had stood: Dawson, 1,390; Lincoln, 1,376; Carpenter, 1,170; Stuart, 1,164. On being elected Lincoln went to a friend, Coleman Smoot, who was farming near New Salem, and asked Smoot, "Did you vote for me?" and on Smoot answering "Yes," he said, "I want to buy some clothes and fix up a little, and I want you to loan me \$200.00." Therefore he sat at his desk in the state capitol wearing bran-new blue jeans.

He was now away from New Salem and Ann Rutledge. And the girl Ann Rutledge had been engaged to marry John McNeil, the storekeeper and farmer who had come to New Salem and in five years acquired property worth \$12,000.00. In money and looks McNeil was considered a "good catch"; and he and Ann Rutledge were known as betrothed, when McNeil started on a trip East. In a short time, as soon as he could visit his father and relatives in New York, he would come back and claim his bride. This was the promise and understanding.

And it was known to Lincoln, who had helped McNeil on deeds to land holdings, that McNeil's real name was McNamar. This was the name put in the deeds. He said he had come West taking another name in order that he might make his fortune without interference from his family back East. He had, for convenience, kept his name off election poll books, and never voted.

McNamar had been away for months and sent few letters, writing from Ohio that he was delayed by an attack of fever, writing again from New York that his father had died and he could not come West till the estate was settled. Thus letters came, with excuses, from far off. Whisperers talked about it in New Salem. Had his love died down? Or was a truthful love to be expected from a man who would live under a false name?

Days were going hard for the little heart under the face framed in auburn hair over in New Salem, as Lincoln had his thoughts at his desk in the capitol at Vandalia. She had sung to him, clear-voiced, a hymn he liked with a line, "Vain man, thy fond pursuits forbear."

He introduced a bill limiting the jurisdiction of justices of the peace; he introduced a bill to authorize Samuel Musick to build a toll bridge across Salt Creek; he moved to change the rules so that it should not be in order to offer amendments to any bill after the third reading; he offered a resolution relating to a state revenue to be derived from the sale of public lands; he moved to take from the table a report submitted by his committee on public accounts. And he had his thoughts. The line had been sung for him clear-voiced, "Vain man, thy fond pursuits forbear."

Back to New Salem he came in the spring of 1835. And there was refuge for Ann Rutledge, with her hand in a long-fingered hand whose bones told of understanding and a quiet security. She had written McNamar that she expected release from her pledge to him. And no answer had come; letters had stopped coming. Her way was clear. In the fall she was to go to a young ladies' academy in Jacksonville; and Abraham Lincoln, poor in goods and deep in debts, was to get from under his poverty; and they were to marry. They would believe in the days to come; for the present time they had understanding and security.

The cry and the answer of one yellowhammer to another, the wing flash of one bluejay on a home flight to another, the drowsy dreaming of grass and grain coming up with its early green over the moist rolling prairie, these were to be felt that spring together, with the whisper, "Always together."

He was twenty-six, she was twenty-two; the earth was their footstool; the sky was a sheaf of blue dreams; the rise of the blood-gold rim of a full moon in the evening was almost too much to live, see, and remember.

40

James Rutledge had sold his New Salem tavern to the Onstotts, and taken his family to a farm near Sand Ridge. Lincoln rode back and forth between New Salem and the Rutledge farm when he paid Ann a call. They were talking over their plans. Ann was proud of Lincoln, and believed he had a future and would make a name as a great man. In her father's tavern at New Salem she had heard men say Abe Lincoln was considerable of a thinker and a politician; he had a way with people; he had an independent mind and yet he wanted to learn. He would go far and she would go with him; she would

be to him what other women had been to other men in days gone by, women who were the wives of Rutledges, among whom there had been a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a governor, judges of courts, and other holders of high place.

For a time Ann worked at the farm of James Short and Lincoln rode over there to see her. He could laugh with her over Parthenia Hill, who had married a man who once wanted to marry Ann, saying, "Ann isn't beautiful—to begin with she has red hair."

She and Lincoln talked over the plan for her to go in the following autumn to the Jacksonville Female Academy, while he would register in the Illinois College at Jacksonville. A brother of Bill Green was a student there, some of the schoolteachers around Sangamon County had been Illinois College students, and Ann's own brother David was studying there in that spring of 1835. Out of his companionship with Ann Rutledge, Lincoln had taken seriously to plans for a college education. He would have to leave college to sit in legislative sessions, but that could be arranged.

He was a witness to the wedding of William Taylor and Emaline Johnson in May, signed their "Bans of Matrimony," and believed that with luck he would in another year be married himself.

In the summer of 1835, the brother of Lincoln's betrothed woman wrote three letters, all on one sheet of paper, and saved postage by having a fellow-student carry the three-in-one letter from Jacksonville to the Rutledge farm near Sand Ridge. This letter of young David Rutledge to his father explained that the carrier of the letter, Mr. Blood, should be invited to stay all night free of cost; also that an editor, Brooks, could not pay money owing to James Rutledge and therefore David had subscribed for the editor's paper; and furthermore that David had planned to come home, but that the college wouldn't pay him back his tuition money for the term, and therefore he was staying on.

The letters were quaint, as in David addressing Anna Rutledge as "Valued Sister," and in closing each of the letters with the formal expression, "I add nomore," the word "nomore" being used then in letters, speeches, and sermons as one word, with the accent on the second syllable. Also in the missive, the ideals of courtesy and the aspirations for higher life, among the Rutledges, were reflected. The letter to the father read:

COLLEGE HILL, July 27, 1835.

DEAR FATHER:—

The passing of Mr. Blood from this place to that affords me an opportunity of writing you a few lines. I have thus far enjoyed good health, and the students generally are well. I have not collected anything of Brooks, except that I agreed to take his paper as I thought that would be better than nothing at all, though he says he could pay the order in about two months. L. M. Greene is up at home at this time trying to get a school, and I had concluded to quit this place and go to him untill the commencement of the next term, but I could not get off without paying for the whole term, therefore I concluded to stay here.

If Mr. Blood calls on you to stay all night, please to entertain him free of cost,

as he is one of my fellow students and I believe him to be a good religious young man. I add nomore, but remain yours with respect until death.

D. H. RUTLEDGE.

To James Rutledge.

The second letter was to James Kittridge about school-teaching on Sand Ridge, the letter closing: "I want intelligence to come the next mail concerning it. I add nomore." Then came advice and hopes for his sister, in the following letter:

To Anna Rutledge:

Valued Sister. So far as I can understand Miss Graves will teach another school in the Diamond Grove. I am glad to hear that you have a notion of coming to school, and I earnestly recommend to you that you would spare no time from improving your education and mind. Remember that Time is worth more than all gold therefore throw away none of your golden moments. I add nomore, but &c.

D. H. RUTLEDGE.

Anna Rutledge.

And Ann might have remarked to herself that some of the golden moments of that year had been snatched and counted, and measured over again in memories afterward.

41

August of that summer came. Corn and grass, fed by rich rains in May and June, stood up stunted of growth, for want of more rain. The red berries on the honeysuckles refused to be glad. The swallows and martins came fewer.

To the homes of the settlers came chills and fever of malaria. Lincoln had been down, and up, and down again with aching bones, taking large spoons of Peruvian bark, boneset tea, jalap, and calomel. One and another of his friends had died; for some, he had helped nail together the burial boxes.

Ann Rutledge lay fever-burned. Days passed; help arrived and was helpless. Moans came from her for the one man of her thoughts. They sent for him. He rode out from New Salem to the Sand Ridge farm. They let him in; they left the two together and alone a last hour in the log house, with slants of light on her face from an open clapboard door. It was two days later that death came.

There was what they called a funeral, a decent burial of the body in the Concord burying ground seven miles away. And Lincoln sat for hours with no words for those who asked him to speak to them. They went away from him knowing he would be alone whether they stayed or went away.

A week after the burial of Ann Rutledge, Bill Green found him rambling in the woods along the Sangamon River, mumbling sentences Bill couldn't make out. They watched him and tried to keep him safe among friends at New Salem. And he rambled darkly and idly past their circle to the burying ground seven miles away, where he lay with an arm across the one grave.

"Vain man, thy fond pursuits forbear." As the autumn weeks passed, and

the scarlet runners sent out signals across the honey locust and the sycamore tree where they had sat together on the Salem hilltop, and the sunsets flamed earlier in the shortening afternoons, the watchers saw a man struggling on a brink; he needed help. Dr. Allen said rest would help. They took him to the home of Bowling and Nancy Green, at the foot of a bluff climbed by oak-timber growths. A few days he helped in the field at cornhusking; most of the time Nancy had him cutting wood, picking apples, digging potatoes, doing light chores around the house, once holding the yarn for her as she spun.

In the evenings it was useless to try to talk with him. They asked their questions and then had to go away. He sat by the fire one night as the flames licked up the cordwood and swept up the chimney to pass out into a driving storm-wind. The blowing weather woke some sort of lights in him and he went to the door and looked out into a night of fierce tumbling wind and black horizons. And he came back saying, "I can't bear to think of her out there alone." And he clenched his hands, mumbling, "The rain and the storm shan't beat on her grave."

Slowly, as the weeks passed, an old-time order of control came back to him—only it was said that the shadows of a burning he had been through were fixed in the depths of his eyes, and he was a changed man keeping to himself the gray mystery of the change.

THE SHORT STORY

A NOTE ON THE SHORT STORY

SHORT stories, being short in comparison to novels, necessarily employ subjects which may be treated within the limited scope of, say, two thousand to ten thousand words. The incident (or series of incidents) presented must be comparatively self-contained, though it usually has strong and significant implications of action, character-development, and ideas outside itself. Thus, for example, a trivial incident may be so revealing of a person's character that from it all that is worth knowing about his past and future life may be inferred, and the leisurely and ramified treatment which a novel would give such a person is rendered unnecessary and inappropriate. A good short story is never a summary of a novel.

Yet though limited in mere length, the short story still permits great variety of subject and treatment. Group I of the stories which follow illustrates some of the possible treatments of a single subject: the relations between parents and children. Among them are the treatment of simple realism, which presents life carefully and calmly as the author sees it, with sympathy but with no special attitude; of humor, whereby the author moves his reader to love and laugh at his characters simultaneously; of satire, which edges the reader's laughter with contempt; of tragedy, which fills the reader with pity at the spectacle of helpless mortals caught in a web of circumstance from which there is no escape; of fantasy, which transports him quite out of this world; and of a mystery, where the sheer interest of an exciting story so concentrates attention that the reader becomes little more than an amateur detective. Other treatments are of course possible, as some of the stories in Group II show—especially an author's insistence upon a theme, sometimes a strictly sociological one, sometimes one of more general social or philosophical import.

Not only do authors tell their stories from a variety of motives; they tell them in a variety of ways, using any one of many narrative conventions. Commonest is the assumption that the author is omniscient about the actions, emotions, and thoughts of all his characters: a convention which affords the author plenty of opportunity to comment on his own story. He may, however, choose to limit his omniscience to actions and speeches only and so give a semblance of objectivity to his narrative. Or he may choose to be omniscient about only one person and so to show the action and the other characters through that person's consciousness: a convention which may be carried so far that the story may appear to be only a segment of that person's "stream of consciousness," and which is obviously appropriate to studies of various psychological states. Sometimes one of the characters is allowed to tell the story in his own words, a method particularly advantageous when the purpose is to reveal tenderly or

to satirize the person talking—or writing, for he may tell his story in letters, a diary, or some other written form.

But to note the particular mode of narration is unimportant unless one wishes to judge its appropriateness. To decide what the author was trying to do and how well he succeeded is far more important.

Group 1

JAMES GOULD COZZENS (*b. 1903*) attained *The Atlantic Monthly* when he was sixteen, and wrote his first novel at nineteen. He is the author of various novels, among them *Michael Scarlett* (1925), *S.S. San Pedro* (1931), *The Last Adam* (1933), *Men and Brethren* (1936), *The Just and the Unjust* (1942), as well as numerous short stories.

TOTAL STRANGER

CLAD in a long gray duster, wearing a soft gray cap, my father, who was short and strong, sat bolt upright. Stiffly, he held his gauntleted hands straight out on the wheel. The car jiggled scurrying along the narrow New England country road. Sometimes, indignant, my father drove faster. Then, to emphasize what he was saying, and for no other reason, he drove much slower. Though he was very fond of driving, he drove as badly as most people who had grown up before there were cars to drive.

"Well," I said, "I can't help it."

"Of course you can help it!" my father snorted, adding speed. His severe, dark mustache seemed to bristle a little. He had on tinted sunglasses, and he turned them on me.

"For heaven's sake, look what you're doing!" I cried. He looked just in time, but neither his dignity nor his train of thought was shaken. He continued: "Other boys help it, don't they?"

"If you'd just let me finish," I began elaborately. "If you'd just give me a chance to—"

"Go on, go on," he said. "Only don't tell me you can't help it! I'm very tired of hearing—"

"Well, it's mostly Mr. Clifford," I said. "He has it in for me. And if you want to know why, it's because I'm not one of his gang of bootlickers, who hang around his study to bum some tea, every afternoon practically." As I spoke, I could really feel that I would spurn an invitation so dangerous to my independence. The fact that Mr. Clifford rarely spoke to me except to give

"Total Stranger," reprinted from *The Saturday Evening Post*. Copyright, 1936, by the Curtis Publishing Company.

me another hour's detention became a point in my favor. "So, to get back at me, he tells the Old Man—"

"Do you mean Doctor Holt?"

"Everyone calls him that. Why shouldn't I?"

"If you were a little more respectful, perhaps you wouldn't be in trouble all the time."

"I'm not in trouble all the time. I'm perfectly respectful. This year I won't be in the dormitory any more, so Snifty can't make up a lot of lies about me."

My father drove dashing past a farmhouse in a billow of dust and flurry of panic-struck chickens. "Nonsense!" he said. "Sheer nonsense! Doctor Holt wrote that after a long discussion in faculty meeting he was satisfied that your attitude—"

"Oh, my attitude!" I groaned. "For heaven's sake, a fellow's attitude! Of course, I don't let Snifty walk all over me. What do you think I am? That's what that means. It means that I'm not one of Snifty's little pets, hanging around to bum some tea."

"You explained about the tea before," my father said. "I don't feel that it quite covers the case. How about the other masters? Do they also expect you to come around and take tea with them? When they tell the headmaster that you make no effort to do your work, does that mean that they are getting back at you?"

I drew a deep breath in an effort to feel less uncomfortable. Though I was experienced in defending myself, and with my mother, could do it very successfully, there was a certain remote solemnity about my father which made me falter. From my standpoint, talking to my father was a risky business, since he was only interested in proved facts. From his standpoint, I had reason to know, my remarks would form nothing but a puerile exhibition of sorry nonsense. The result was that he avoided, as long as he could, these serious discussions, and I avoided, as long as I could, any discussions at all.

I said laboriously, "Well, I don't think they told him that. Not all of them. And I can prove it, because didn't I get promoted with my form? What did I really flunk, except maybe algebra? I suppose Mr. Blackburn was the one who said it." I nodded several times, as though it confirmed my darkest suspicions.

My father said frigidly, "In view of the fact that your grade for the year was forty-four, I wouldn't expect him to be exactly delighted with you."

"Well, I can tell you something about that," I said, ill at ease, but sufficiently portentous. "You can ask anyone. He's such a bum teacher that you don't learn anything in his courses. He can't even explain the simplest thing. Why, once he was working out a problem on the board, and I had to laugh, he couldn't get it himself. Until finally one of the fellows who is pretty good in math had to show him where he made a mistake even a first former wouldn't make. And that's how good he is."

My father said, "Now, I don't want any more argument. I simply want you to understand that this fall term will be your last chance. Doctor Holt is disgusted with you. I want you to think how your mother would feel if you

disgrace her by being dropped at Christmas. I want you to stop breaking rules and wasting time."

He let the car slow down for emphasis. He gave me a look, at once penetrating and baffled. He could see no sense in breaking the simple, necessary rules of any organized society; and wasting time was worse than wrong, it was mad and dissolute. Time lost, he very well knew, can never be recovered. Left to himself, my father's sensible impulse would probably have been to give me a thrashing I'd remember. But this was out of the question, for my mother had long ago persuaded him that he, too, believed in reasoning with a child.

Looking at me, he must have found the results of reasoning as unimpressive as ever. He said, with restrained grimness, "And if you're sent home, don't imagine that you can go back to the academy. You'll go straight into the public school and stay there. So just remember that."

"Oh, I'll remember all right," I nodded significantly. I had not spent the last two years without, on a number of occasions, having to think seriously about what I'd do if I were expelled. I planned to approach a relative of mine connected with a steamship company and get a job on a boat.

"See that you do!" said my father. We looked at each other with mild antagonism. Though I was still full of arguments, I knew that none of them would get me anywhere, and I was, as always, a little alarmed and depressed by my father's demonstrable rightness about everything. In my position, I supposed that he would always do his lessons, never break any rules, and probably end up a prefect, with his rowing colors and a football letter—in fact, with everything that I would like, if only the first steps toward them did not seem so dull and difficult. Since they did, I was confirmed in my impression that it was impossible to please him. Since it was impossible, I had long been resolved not to care whether I pleased him or not. Practice had made not caring fairly easy.

As for my father, surely he viewed me with much the same resentful astonishment. My mother was accustomed to tell him that he did not understand me. He must have been prepared to believe it; indeed, he must have wondered if he understood anything when he tried to reconcile such facts as my marks with such contentions as my mother's that I had a brilliant mind. At the moment he could doubtless think of nothing else to say, so he drove faster, as if he wanted to get away from the whole irksome matter; but suddenly the movement of the car was altered by a series of heavy, jolting bumps.

"Got a flat," I said with satisfaction and relief. "Didn't I tell you? Everybody knows those tires pick up nails. You can ask anybody."

My father edged the limping car to the side of the road. In those days you had to expect punctures if you drove any distance, so my father was not particularly put out. He may have been glad to get his mind off a discussion which was not proving very profitable. When we had changed the tire—we had demountable rims, which made it wonderfully easy, as though you were putting something over on a puncture—we were both in better spirits and could resume our normal, polite and distant attitudes. That is, what I said was

noncommittal, but not impertinent; and what he said was perfunctory, but not hostile. We got into Sansbury at five o'clock, having covered one hundred and three miles, which passed at the time for a long, hard drive.

When my father drove me up to school, we always stopped at Sansbury. The hotel was not a good or comfortable one, but it was the only convenient place to break the journey. Sansbury was a fair-sized manufacturing town, and the hotel got enough business from traveling salesmen—who, of course, traveled by train—to operate in a shabby way something like a metropolitan hotel. It had a gloomy little lobby with rows of huge armchairs and three or four imitation-marble pillars. There were two surly bellboys, one about twelve, the other about fifty. The elevator, already an antique, was made to rise by pulling on a cable. In the dark dining room a few sad, patient, middle-aged waitresses distributed badly cooked food, much of it, for some reason, served in separate little dishes of the heaviest possible china. It was all awful.

But this is in retrospect. At the time I thought the hotel more pleasant than not. My father had the habit, half stoical, half insensitive, of making the best of anything there was. Though he acted with promptness and decision when it was in his power to change circumstances, he did not grumble when it wasn't. If the food was bad, favored by an excellent digestion, he ate it anyway. If his surroundings were gloomy and the company either boring to him or nonexistent, he did not fidget.

When he could find one of the novels at the moment seriously regarded, he would read it critically. When he couldn't, he would make notes on business affairs in a shorthand of his own invention which nobody else could read. When he had no notes to make, he would retire, without fuss or regret, into whatever his thoughts were.

I had other ideas of entertainment. At home I was never allowed to go to the moving pictures, for my mother considered the films themselves silly and cheap, and the theaters likely to be infested with germs. Away from home, I could sometimes pester my father into taking me. As we moved down the main street of Sansbury—my father serenely terrorizing all the rest of the traffic—I was watching to see what was at the motion-picture theater. To my chagrin, it proved to be Annette Kellerman in *A Daughter of the Gods*, and I could be sure I wouldn't be taken to that.

The hotel garage was an old stable facing the kitchen wing across a yard of bare dirt forlornly stained with oil. My father halted in the middle of it and honked his horn until finally the fifty-year-old bellboy appeared, scowling. While my father had an argument with him over whether luggage left in the car would be safe, I got out. Not far away there stood another car. The hood was up, and a chauffeur in his shirt sleeves had extracted and spread out on a sheet of old canvas an amazing array of parts. The car itself was a big impressive landaulet with carriage lamps at the doorposts. I moved toward it and waited until the chauffeur noticed me.

"What's the trouble?" I inquired professionally.

Busy with a wrench, he grunted, "Cam shaft."

"Oh! How much'll she do?"

"Hundred miles an hour."

"Ah, go on!"

"Beat it," he said. "I got no time."

My father called me, and, aggrieved, I turned away, for I felt sure that I had been treated with so little respect because I had been compelled to save my clothes by wearing for the trip an old knickerbocker suit and a gray cloth hat with the scarlet monogram of a summer camp I used to go to on it. Following the aged bellboy through the passage toward the lobby, I said to my father, "Well, I guess I'll go up and change."

My father said, "There's no necessity for that. Just see that you wash properly, and you can take a bath before you go to bed."

"I don't see how I can eat in a hotel, looking like this," I said. "I should think you'd want me to look halfway respectable. I—"

"Nonsense!" said my father. "If you wash your face and hands, you'll look perfectly all right."

The aged bellboy dumped the bags indignantly, and my father went up to the imitation-marble desk to register. The clerk turned the big book around and gave him a pen. I wanted to sign for myself, so I was standing close to him, watching him write in his quick, scratchy script, when suddenly the pen paused. He held his hand, frowning a little.

"Come on," I said, "I want to—"

"Now, you can just wait until I finish," he answered. When he had finished, he let me have the pen. To the clerk he said, "Curious coincidence! I used to know someone by that name." He stopped short, gave the clerk a cold, severe look, as though he meant to indicate that the fellow would be well advised to attend to his own business, and turned away.

The elevator was upstairs. While we stood listening to its creeping, creaky descent, my father said "Hm!" and shook his head several times. The lighted cage came into view. My father gazed at it a moment. Then he said "Hm!" again. It came shaking to a halt in front of us. The door opened, and a woman walked out. Her eyes went over us in a brief, impersonal glance. She took two steps, pulled up short, and looked at us again. Then, with a sort of gasp, she said, "Why, Will!"

My father seemed to have changed color a little, but he spoke with his ordinary equability: "How are you, May? I had an idea it might be you."

She came right up to him. She put her hand on his arm. "Will!" she repeated. "Well, now, honestly!" She gave his arm a quick squeeze, tapped it and dropped her hand. "Will, I can't believe it! Isn't it funny! You know, I never planned to stop here. If that wretched car hadn't broken down—"

I was looking at her with blank curiosity, and I saw at once that she was pretty—though not in the sense in which you applied pretty to a girl, exactly. In a confused way, she seemed to me to look more like a picture—the sort of woman who might appear on a completed jigsaw puzzle, or on the back of a pack of cards. Her skin had a creamy, powdered tone. Her eyes had a soft, gay shine which I knew from unconscious observation was not usual in a

mature face. Her hair was just so. Very faint, yet very distinct, too, the smell of violets reached me. Although she was certainly not wearing anything resembling evening dress, and, in fact, had a hat on, something about her made me think of my mother when she was ready to go to one of the dances they called assemblies, or of the mothers of my friends who came to dinner looking not at all as they usually looked. I was so absorbed in this feeling of strangeness—I neither liked it nor disliked it; it simply bewildered me—that I didn't hear anything until my father said rather sharply, "John! Say how do you do to Mrs. Prentice!"

"I can't get over it!" she was saying. She broke into a kind of bubbling laughter. "Why, he's grown up, Will! Oh, dear, doesn't it make you feel queer?"

Ordinarily, I much resented that adult trick of talking about you as if you weren't there, but the grown-up was all right, and she looked at me without a trace of the customary patronage; as though, of course, I saw the joke too. She laughed again. I would not have had the faintest idea why, yet I was obliged to laugh in response.

She asked brightly, "Where's Hilda?"

My father answered, with slight constraint, that my mother was not with us, that he was just driving me up to school.

Mrs. Prentice said, "Oh, that's too bad. I'd so like to see her." She smiled at me again and said, "Will, I can't face that dreadful dining room. I was going to have something sent up. They've given me what must be the bridal suite." She laughed. "You should see it! Why don't we all have supper up there?"

"Capital!" my father said.

The word astonished me. I was more or less familiar with most of my father's expressions, and that certainly was not one of them. I thought it sounded funny, but Mrs. Prentice said, "Will, you haven't changed a bit! But then, you wouldn't. It comes from having such a wonderful disposition."

The aged bellboy had put our luggage in the elevator and shuffled his feet beside it, glowering at us. "Leave the supper to me," my father said. "I'll see if something fit to eat can be ordered. We'll be down in about half an hour."

In our room, my father gave the aged bellboy a quarter. It was more than a bellboy in a small-town hotel would ever expect to get, and so, more than my father would normally give, for he was very exact in money matters and considered lavishness not only wasteful but rather common, and especially bad for the recipient, since it made him dissatisfied when he was given what he really deserved. He said to me, "You can go in the bathroom first, and see that you wash your neck and ears. If you can get your blue suit out without unpacking everything else, change to that."

While I was splashing around I could hear him using the telephone. It did not work very well, but he must eventually have prevailed over it, for when I came out he had unpacked his shaving kit. With the strop hung on a clothes hook, he was whacking a razor up and down. Preoccupied, he sang, or rather

grumbled, to himself, for he was completely tone-deaf: "I am the monarch of the sea, the ruler of the Queen's—"

The room where we found Mrs. Prentice was quite a big one, with a large dark-green carpet on the floor, and much carved furniture, upholstered where possible in green velvet of the color of the carpet. Long full glass curtains and green velvet drapes shrouded the windows, so the lights—in brass wall brackets and a wonderfully coiled and twisted chandelier—were on. There was also an oil painting in a great gold frame showing a group of red-trousered French soldiers defending a farmhouse against the Prussians—the type of art I liked most. It all seemed to me tasteful and impressive, but Mrs. Prentice said, "Try not to look at it!" She and my father both laughed.

"I don't know what we'll get," my father said. "I did what I could."

"Anything will do," she said. "Will, you're a godsend! I was expiring for a cocktail, but I hated to order one by myself."

I was startled. My father was not a drinking man. At home I could tell when certain people were coming to dinner, for a tray with glasses and a decanter of sherry would appear in the living room about the time I was going upstairs, and a bottle of sauterne would be put in the icebox.

My mother usually had a rehearsal after the table was set, to make sure that the maid remembered how wine was poured.

Sometimes, when I was at the tennis club, my father would bring me into the big room with the bar and we would both have lemonades. I had never actually seen him drink anything else, so I had an impression that drinking was unusual and unnecessary. I even felt that it was reprehensible, since I knew that the man who took care of the garden sometimes had to be spoken to about it.

To my astonishment, my father said, as though it were the most natural thing in the world, "Well, we can't let you expire, May. What'll it be?"

She said, "I'd love a Clover Club, Will. Do you suppose they could make one?"

My father said, "We'll soon find out! But I think I'd better go down and superintend it myself. That bar looks the reverse of promising."

Left alone with Mrs. Prentice, my amazement kept me vaguely uncomfortable. I studied the exciting details of the fight for the farmhouse, but I was self-conscious, for I realized that she was looking at me. When I looked at her, she was lighting a gold-tipped cigarette which she had taken from a white cardboard box on the table. She seemed to understand something of my confusion. She said, "Many years ago your father and I were great friends, John. After I was married, I went to England to live—to London. I was there until my husband died, so we didn't see each other. That's why we were both so surprised."

I could not think of anything to say. Mrs. Prentice tried again. "You two must have wonderful times together," she said. "He's lot of fun, isn't he?"

Embarrassed, I inadvertently nodded; and thinking that she had found the right subject, she went on warmly, "He was always the most wonderful

swimmer and tennis player, and a fine cyclist. I don't know how many cups he took for winning the century run."

Of course, I had often seen my father play tennis. He played it earnestly, about as well as a strong but short-legged amateur who didn't have much time for it could. He was a powerful swimmer, but he did not impress me particularly, even when he swam, as he was fond of doing, several miles; for he never employed anything but a measured, monotonous breast stroke which moved him through the water with unbending dignity. It was very boring to be in the boat accompanying him across some Maine lake. I had no idea what a century run was, but I guessed it meant bicycling, so my confusion and amazement were all the greater. The fad for bicycling wasn't within my memory. I could as easily imagine my father playing tag or trading cigarette pictures as riding a bicycle.

Mrs. Prentice must have wondered what was wrong with me. She could see that I ought to be past the stage when overpowering shyness would be natural. She must have known, too, that she had a more than ordinary gift for attracting people and putting them at ease. No doubt, her failure with me mildly vexed and amused her.

She arose, saying, "Oh, I forgot! I have something." She swept into the room beyond. In a moment she came back with a box in her hands. I had stood up awkwardly when she stood up. She brought the box to me. It was very elaborate. A marvelous arrangement of candied fruits and chocolates filled it. I said, "Thank you very much," I took the smallest and plainest piece of chocolate I could see.

"You mustn't spoil your appetite, must you?" she said, her eyes twinkling. "You take what you want. We won't tell your father."

Her air of cordial conspiracy really warmed me. I tried to smile, but I didn't find myself any more articulate. I said again, "Thank you. This is really all I want."

"All right, John," she said. "We'll leave it on the desk there, in case you change your mind."

The door, which had stood ajar, swung open. In came my father, carrying a battered cocktail shaker wrapped in a napkin. He headed a procession made up of the young bellboy, with a folding table; the old bellboy, with a bunch of roses in a vase; and a worried-looking waitress, with a tray of silver and glasses and folded linen.

"Why, Will," Mrs. Prentice cried, "it's just like magic!"

My father said, "What it will be just like, I'm afraid, is the old Ocean House."

"Oh, oh!" Mrs. Prentice laughed. "The sailing parties! You know, I haven't thought of those—and those awful buffet suppers!"

"Very good," my father said, looking at the completed efforts of his procession. "Please try to see that the steak is rare and gets here hot. That's all." He filled two glasses with pink liquid from the cocktail shaker. He brought one of them to Mrs. Prentice, and, lifting the other, said, "Well, May. Moonlight Bay!"

She looked at him, quick and intent. She began quizzically to smile. It seemed to me she blushed a little. "All right, Will," she said and drank.

They were both silent for an instant. Then, with a kind of energetic abruptness, she said, "Lottie Frazer! Oh, Will, do you know, I saw Lottie a month or two ago."

I sat quiet, recognizing adult conversation and knowing that it would be dull. I fixed my eyes on the battle picture. I tried to imagine myself behind the mottled stone wall with the French infantrymen, but constantly I heard Mrs. Prentice laugh. My father kept responding, but with an odd, light, good-humored inflection, as though he knew that she would laugh again as soon as he finished speaking. I could not make my mind stay on the usually engrossing business of thinking myself into a picture.

". . . you were simply furious," I heard Mrs. Prentice saying. "I didn't blame you."

My father said, "I guess I was."

"You said you'd break his neck."

They had my full attention, but I had missed whatever it was, for my father only responded, "Poor old Fred!" and looked thoughtfully at his glass. "So you're going back?"

Mrs. Prentice nodded. "This isn't really home to me. Becky and I are—well, I can hardly believe we're sisters. She disapproves of me so."

"I don't remember Becky ever approving of anything," my father said. "There's frankness for you."

"Oh, but she approved of you!" Mrs. Prentice looked at him a moment.

"I never knew it," said my father. "She had a strange way of showing it. I had the impression that she thought I was rather wild, and hanging would be too good—"

"Oh, Will, the things you never knew!" Mrs. Prentice shook her head. "And of course, the person Becky really couldn't abide was Joe. They never spoke to each other. Not even at the wedding." Mrs. Prentice gazed at me, but abstractedly, without expression. She started to look back to my father, stopped herself, gave me a quick little smile, and then looked back. My father was examining his glass.

"Ah, well," he said, "'there is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them—'"

Mrs. Prentice smiled. "Do you still write poetry?" she asked.

My father looked at her as though taken aback. "No," he said. He chuckled, but not with composure. "And what's more, I never did."

"Oh, but I think I could say some of it to you."

"Don't," said my father. "I'm afraid I was a very pretentious young man." At that moment, dinner arrived on two trays under a number of big metal covers.

I thought the dinner was good, and ate all that was offered me; yet eating seemed to form no more than a pleasant, hardly noticed undercurrent to my thoughts. From time to time I looked at the empty cocktail glasses or the great

box of candied fruits and chocolates. I stole glances at Mrs. Prentice's pretty, lively face. Those fragments of conversation repeated themselves to me.

Intently, vainly, I considered "century run," "Ocean House," "Moonlight Bay." I wondered about Fred, whose neck, it seemed, my father thought of breaking; about this Becky and what she approved of; and about the writing of poetry. My mother had done a good deal to acquaint me with poetry. She read things like "Adonais," the "Ode to a Nightingale," "The Hound of Heaven" to me; and though I did not care much for them, I knew enough about poets to know that my father had little in common with pictures of Shelley and Keats. I had never seen a picture of Francis Thompson, but I could well imagine.

Thus I had already all I could handle; and though talk went on during the meal, I hardly heard what they were saying. My attention wasn't taken until Mrs. Prentice, pouring coffee from a little pot, said something about the car.

My father accepted the small cup and answered, "I don't know that it's wise."

"But I've just got to," she said. "I can't make the boat unless—"

"Well, if you've got to, you've got to," my father said. "Are you sure he knows the roads? There are one or two places where you can easily make the wrong turn. I think I'd better get a map I have and mark it for you. It will only take a moment."

"Oh, Will," she said, "that would be such a help."

My father set his cup down and arose with decision. When we were alone, Mrs. Prentice got up too. As I had been taught to, I jumped nervously to my feet. She went and took the box from the desk and brought it to me again.

"Thank you very much," I stammered. I found another small plain piece of chocolate. "I'm going to put the cover on," she said, "and you take it with you."

I made a feeble protesting sound. I was aware that I ought not to accept such a considerable present from a person I did not know, but I realized that, with it, I was bound to be very popular on my arrival—at least, until the evening school meeting, when anything left would have to be turned in.

She could see my painful indecision. She set the box down. She gave a clear warm laugh, extended a hand and touched me on the chin. "John, you're a funny boy!" she said. My mother had sometimes addressed those very words to me, but with an air of great regret; meaning that the way I had just spoken or acted, while not quite deserving punishment, saddened her. Mrs. Prentice's tone was delighted, as though the last thing she meant to do was reprove me. "You don't like strangers to bother you, do you?"

The touch of her hand so astonished me that I hadn't moved a muscle. "I didn't think you were, at first," she said, "but you are! You don't look very much like him, but you can't imagine how exactly—" She broke into that delighted little laugh again. Without warning, she bent forward and kissed my cheek.

I was frightfully embarrassed. My instant reaction was a sense of deep out-

rage, for I thought that I had been made to look like a child and a fool. Collecting my wits took me a minute, however; and I found then that I was not angry at all. My first fear—that she might mean to imply that I was just a baby or a little boy—was too clearly unfounded. I was not sure just what she did mean, but part of it, I realized, was that I had pleased her somehow, that she had suddenly felt a liking for me, and that people she liked, she kissed.

I stood rigid, my face scarlet. She went on at once: "Will you do something for me, John? Run down and see if you can find my chauffeur. His name is Alex. Tell him to bring the car around as soon as he can. Would you do that?"

"Yes, Mrs. Prentice," I said.

I left the room quickly. It was only the second floor, so I found the stairs instead of waiting for the elevator. I went down slowly, gravely and bewildered, thinking of my father and how extraordinary it all was; how different he seemed, and yet I could see, too, that he really hadn't changed. What he said and did was new to me, but not new to him. Somehow it all fitted together. I could feel that.

I came into the lobby and went down the back passage and out to the yard. It was now lighted by an electric bulb in a tin shade over the stable door. A flow of thin light threw shadows upon the bare earth. The hood of the big landaulet was down in place, and the man was putting some things away. "Alex!" I said authoritatively.

He turned sharp, and I said, "Mrs. Prentice wants you to bring the car around at once." He continued to look at me a moment. Then he smiled broadly. He touched his cap and said, "Very good, sir."

When I got back upstairs, my father had returned. The old bellboy was taking out a couple of bags. After a moment Mrs. Prentice came from the other room with a coat on and a full veil pinned over her face and hat. "Thank you, John," she said to me. "Don't forget this." She nodded at the big box on the table. I blushed and took it.

"Aren't you going to thank Mrs. Prentice?" my father asked.

She said, "Oh, Will, he's thanked me already. Don't bother him."

"Bother him!" said my father. "He's not bothered. Why, I can remember my father saying to me, 'Step up here, sir, and I'll mend your manners!' And for less than not saying thank you. I'm slack, but I know my parental duties."

They both laughed, and I found myself laughing too. We all went out to the elevator.

In front of the hotel, at the bottom of the steps, the car stood. "Just see he follows the map," my father said. "You can't miss it." He looked at the sky. "Fine moonlight night! I wouldn't mind driving myself."

"Will," said Mrs. Prentice, "Will!" She took his hand in both of hers and squeezed it. "Oh, I hate to say good-bye like this! Why, I've hardly seen you at all!"

"There," said my father. "It's wonderful to have seen you, May."

She turned her veiled face toward me. "Well, John! Have a grand time at school!"

I said, "Good-bye, Mrs. Prentice. Thank you very much for the—"

The chauffeur held the door open, and my father helped her in. There was a thick click of the latch closing. The chauffeur went around to his seat. We stood on the pavement, waiting while he started the engine. The window was down a little, and I could hear Mrs. Prentice saying, "Good-bye, good-bye."

My father waved a hand, and the car drew away with a quiet, powerful drone. It passed, the sound fading, lights glinting on it, down the almost empty street.

"Well, that's that!" said my father. He looked at me at last and said, "I think you might send a post card to your mother to tell her we got here all right."

I was feeling strangely cheerful and obedient. I thought fleetingly of making a fuss about the movies, but I decided not to. At the newsstand inside, my father bought me a post card showing a covered bridge near the town. I took it to one of the small writing tables by the wall.

"Dear Mother," I wrote with the bad pen, "arrived here safely." I paused. My father had bought a paper and, putting on his glasses, had settled in one of the big chairs. He read with close, critical attention, light shining on his largely bald head, his mustache drawn down sternly. I had seen him reading like that a hundred times, but tonight he did not look quite the same to me. I thought of Mrs. Prentice a moment, but when I came to phrase it, I could not think of anything to say. Instead, I wrote: "We drove over this bridge." I paused again for some time, watching my father read, while I pondered. I wrote: "Father and I had a serious talk. Mean to do better at school—"

Unfortunately, I never did do much better at school. But that year and the years following, I would occasionally try to, for I thought it would please my father.

CONRAD AIKEN (*b. 1889*) is deeply interested in music and psycho-analysis, and both have influenced the style and the subjects of his poetry and prose. His later poems are chiefly notable for their symphonic effects. In fiction he has written unusually accurate, sensitive, sympathetic, and exciting studies in mental pathology. His novels, of which *King Coffin* (1935), the story of a paranoiac who is obsessed with the idea of committing a perfect crime, is the best, are less noteworthy than his short stories, especially those in the volume *Among the Lost People* (1934). This volume contains such famous examples of Mr. Aiken's work as "Mr. Arcularis" and "Silent Snow, Secret Snow."

SILENT SNOW, SECRET SNOW

JUST why it should have happened, or why it should have happened just when it did, he could not, of course, possibly have said; nor perhaps could it even have occurred to him to ask. The thing was above all a secret, something to be preciousely concealed from Mother and Father; and to that very fact it owed an enormous part of its deliciousness. It was like a peculiarly beautiful trinket to be carried unmentioned in one's trouser-pocket—a rare stamp, an old coin, a few tiny gold links found trodden out of shape on the path in the park, a pebble of carnelian, a sea shell distinguishable from all others by an unusual spot or stripe—and, as if it were any one of these, he carried around with him everywhere a warm and persistent and increasingly beautiful sense of possession. Nor was it only a sense of possession—it was also a sense of protection. It was as if, in some delightful way, his secret gave him a fortress, a wall behind which he could retreat into heavenly seclusion. This was almost the first thing he had noticed about it—apart from the oddness of the thing itself—and it was this that now again, for the fiftieth time, occurred to him, as he sat in the little schoolroom. It was the half hour for geography. Miss Buell was revolving with one finger, slowly, a huge terrestrial globe which had been placed on her desk. The green and yellow continents passed and repassed, questions were asked and answered, and now the little girl in front of him, Deirdre, who had a funny little constellation of freckles on the back of her neck, exactly like the Big Dipper, was standing up and telling Miss Buell that the equator was the line that ran round the middle.

Miss Buell's face, which was old and grayish and kindly, with gray stiff curls beside the cheeks, and eyes that swam very brightly, like little minnows, behind thick glasses, wrinkled itself into a complication of amusements.

"Ah! I see. The earth is wearing a belt, or a sash. Or someone drew a line round it!"

"Oh, no—not that—I mean—"

In the general laughter, he did not share, or only a very little. He was thinking about the Arctic and Antarctic regions, which of course, on the globe, were white. Miss Buell was now telling them about the tropics, the jungles, the steamy heat of equatorial swamps, where the birds and butterflies, and even the snakes, were like living jewels. As he listened to these things, he was already, with a pleasant sense of half-effort, putting his secret between himself and the words. Was it really an effort at all? For effort implied something voluntary, and perhaps even something one did not especially want; whereas this was distinctly pleasant, and came almost of its own accord. All he needed to do was to think of that morning, the first one, and then of all the others—

But it was all so absurdly simple! It had amounted to so little. It was nothing, just an idea—and just why it should have become so wonderful, so permanent, was a mystery—a very pleasant one, to be sure, but also, in an amusing way, foolish. However, without ceasing to listen to Miss Buell, who had now moved up to the north temperate zones, he deliberately invited his memory of the first morning. It was only a moment or two after he had waked up—or perhaps the moment itself. But was there, to be exact, an exact moment? Was one awake all at once? or was it gradual? Anyway, it was after he had stretched a lazy hand up towards the headrail, and yawned, and then relaxed again among his warm covers, all the more grateful on a December morning, that the thing had happened. Suddenly, for no reason, he had thought of the postman, he remembered the postman. Perhaps there was nothing so odd in that. After all, he heard the postman almost every morning in his life—his heavy boots could be heard clumping round the corner at the top of the little cobbled hill-street, and then, progressively nearer, progressively louder, the double knock at each door, the crossings and re-crossings of the street, till finally the clumsy steps came stumbling across to the very door, and the tremendous knock came which shook the house itself.

(Miss Buell was saying "Vast wheat-growing areas in North America and Siberia.")

Deirdre had for the moment placed her left hand across the back of her neck.)

But on this particular morning, the first morning, as he lay there with his eyes closed, he had for some reason *waited* for the postman. He wanted to hear him come round the corner. And that was precisely the joke—he never did. He never came. He never had come—*round the corner*—again. For when at last the steps *were* heard, they had already, he was quite sure, come a little down the hill, to the first house; and even so, the steps were curiously different—they were softer, they had a new secrecy about them, they were muffled and indistinct; and while the rhythm of them was the same, it now said a new thing—it said peace, it said remoteness, it said cold, it said sleep. And he had understood the situation at once—nothing could have seemed simpler—there had been snow in the night, such as all winter he had been longing for; and it was this which had rendered the postman's first footsteps inaudible, and the later ones faint. Of course! How lovely! And even now it must be snowing—it was going to be a snowy day—the long white ragged lines were drifting and sifting across the street, across the faces of the old houses, whispering and hushing, making little triangles of white in the corners between cobblestones, seething a little when the wind blew them over the ground to a drifted corner; and so it would be all day, getting deeper and deeper and silenter and silenter.

(Miss Buell was saying "Land of perpetual snow.")

All this time, of course (while he lay in bed), he had kept his eyes closed, listening to the nearer progress of the postman, the muffled footsteps thumping and slipping on the snow-sheathed cobbles; and all the other sounds—the double knocks, a frosty far-off voice or two, a bell ringing thinly and softly

as if under a sheet of ice—had the same slightly abstracted quality, as if removed by one degree from actuality—as if everything in the world had been insulated by snow. But when at last, pleased, he opened his eyes, and turned them towards the window, to see for himself this long-desired and now so clearly imagined miracle—what he saw instead was brilliant sunlight on a roof; and when, astonished, he jumped out of bed and stared down into the street, expecting to see the cobbles obliterated by the snow, he saw nothing but the bare bright cobbles themselves.

Queer, the effect this extraordinary surprise had had upon him—all the following morning he had kept with him a sense as of snow falling about him, a secret screen of new snow between himself and the world. If he had not dreamed such a thing—and how could he have dreamed it while awake?—how else could one explain it? In any case, the delusion had been so vivid as to affect his entire behavior. He could not now remember whether it was on the first or the second morning—or was it even the third?—that his mother had drawn attention to some oddness in his manner.

“But my darling—” she had said at the breakfast table—“what has come over you? You don’t seem to be listening. . . .”

And how often that very thing had happened since!

(Miss Buell was now asking if anyone knew the difference between the North Pole and the Magnetic Pole. Deirdre was holding up her flickering brown hand, and he could see the four white dimples that marked the knuckles.)

Perhaps it hadn’t been either the second or third morning—or even the fourth or fifth. How could he be sure? How could he be sure just when the delicious *progress* had become clear? Just when it had really *begun*? The intervals weren’t very precise. . . . All he now knew was, that at some point or other—perhaps the second day, perhaps the sixth—he had noticed that the presence of the snow was a little more insistent, the sound of it clearer; and, conversely, the sound of the postman’s footsteps more indistinct. Not only could he not hear the steps come round the corner, he could not even hear them at the first house. It was below the first house that he heard them; and then, a few days later, it was below the second house that he heard them; and a few days later again, below the third. Gradually, gradually, the snow was becoming heavier, the sound of its seething louder, the cobblestones more and more muffled. When he found, each morning, on going to the window, after the ritual of listening, that the roofs and cobbles were as bare as ever, it made no difference. This was, after all, only what he had expected. It was even what pleased him, what rewarded him: the thing was his own, belonged to no one else. No one else knew about it, not even his mother and father. There, outside, were the bare cobbles; and here, inside, was the snow. Snow growing heavier each day, muffling the world, hiding the ugly, and deadening increasingly—above all—the steps of the postman.

“But my darling—” she had said at the luncheon table—“what has come over you? You don’t seem to listen when people speak to you. That’s the third time I’ve asked you to pass your plate. . . .”

How was one to explain this to Mother? or to Father? There was, of course, nothing to be done about it: nothing. All one could do was to laugh embarrassedly, pretend to be a little ashamed, apologize, and take a sudden and somewhat disingenuous interest in what was being done or said. The cat had stayed out all night. He had a curious swelling on his left cheek—perhaps somebody had kicked him, or a stone had struck him. Mrs. Kempton was or was not coming to tea. The house was going to be house cleaned, or “turned out,” on Wednesday instead of Friday. A new lamp was provided for his evening work—perhaps it was eye-strain which accounted for this new and so peculiar vagueness of his—Mother was looking at him with amusement as she said this, but with something else as well. A new lamp? A new lamp. Yes Mother, No Mother, Yes Mother. School is going very well. The geometry is very easy. The history is very dull. The geography is very interesting—particularly when it takes one to the North Pole. Why the North Pole? Oh, well, it would be fun to be an explorer. Another Peary or Scott or Shackleton. And then abruptly he found his interest in the talk at an end, stared at the pudding on his plate, listened, waited, and began once more—ah how heavenly, too, the first beginnings—to hear or feel—for could he actually hear it?—the silent snow, the secret snow.

(Miss Buell was telling them about the search for the Northwest Passage, about Hendrik Hudson, the Half Moon.)

This had been, indeed, the only distressing feature of the new experience: the fact that it so increasingly had brought him into a kind of mute misunderstanding, or even conflict, with his father and mother. It was as if he were trying to lead a double life. On the one hand he had to be Paul Hasleman, and keep up the appearance of being that person—dress, wash, and answer intelligently when spoken to—; on the other, he had to explore this new world which had been opened to him. Nor could there be the slightest doubt—not the slightest—that the new world was the profounder and more wonderful of the two. It was irresistible. It was miraculous. Its beauty was simply beyond anything—beyond speech as beyond thought—utterly incommunicable. But how then, between the two worlds, of which he was thus constantly aware, was he to keep a balance? One must get up, one must go to breakfast, one must talk with Mother, go to school, do one’s lessons—and, in all this, try not to appear too much of a fool. But if all the while one was also trying to extract the full deliciousness of another and quite separate existence, one which could not easily (if at all) be spoken of—how was one to manage? How was one to explain? Would it be safe to explain? Would it be absurd? Would it merely mean that he would get into some obscure kind of trouble?

These thoughts came and went, came and went, as softly and secretly as the snow; they were not precisely a disturbance, perhaps they were even a pleasure; he liked to have them; their presence was something almost palpable, something he could stroke with his hand, without closing his eyes, and without ceasing to see Miss Buell and the school-room and the globe and the freckles on Deirdre’s neck; nevertheless he did in a sense cease to see, or to

see the obvious external world, and substituted for this vision the vision of snow, the sound of snow, and the slow, almost soundless, approach of the postman. Yesterday, it had been only at the sixth house that the postman had become audible; the snow was much deeper now, it was falling more swiftly and heavily, the sound of its seething was more distinct, more soothing, more persistent. And this morning, it had been—as nearly as he could figure—just above the seventh house—perhaps only a step or two above: at most, he had heard two or three footsteps before the knock had sounded. . . . And with each such narrowing of the sphere, each nearer approach of the limit at which the postman was first audible, it was odd how sharply was increased the amount of illusion which had to be carried into the ordinary business of daily life. Each day, it was harder to get out of bed, to go to the window, to look out at the—as always—perfectly empty and snowless street. Each day it was more difficult to go through the perfunctory motions of greeting Mother and Father at breakfast, to reply to their questions, to put his books together and go to school. And at school, how extraordinarily hard to conduct with success simultaneously the public life and the life that was secret. There were times when he longed—positively ached—to tell everyone about it—to burst out with it—only to be checked almost at once by a far-off feeling as of some faint absurdity which was inherent in it—but *was* it absurd?—and more importantly by a sense of mysterious power in his very secrecy. Yes: it must be kept secret. That, more and more, became clear. At whatever cost to himself, whatever pain to others—

(Miss Buell looked straight at him, smiling, and said, "Perhaps we'll ask Paul. I'm sure Paul will come out of his day-dream long enough to be able to tell us. Won't you, Paul." He rose slowly from his chair, resting one hand on the brightly varnished desk, and deliberately stared through the snow towards the blackboard. It was an effort, but it was amusing to make it. "Yes," he said slowly, "it was what we now call the Hudson River. This he thought to be the Northwest Passage. He was disappointed." He sat down again, and as he did so Deirdre half turned in her chair and gave him a shy smile, of approval and admiration.)

At whatever pain to others.

This part of it was very puzzling, very puzzling. Mother was very nice, and so was Father. Yes, that was all true enough. He wanted to be nice to them, to tell them everything—and yet, was it really wrong of him to want to have a secret place of his own?

At bedtime, the night before, Mother had said, "If this goes on, my lad, we'll have to see a doctor, we will! We can't have our boy—" But what was it she had said? "Live in another world"? "Live so far away"? The word "far" had been in it, he was sure, and then Mother had taken up a magazine again and laughed a little, but with an expression which wasn't mirthful. He had felt sorry for her. . . .

The bell rang for dismissal. The sound came to him through long curved parallels of falling snow. He saw Deirdre rise, and had himself risen almost as soon—but not quite as soon—as she.

2

On the walk homeward, which was timeless, it pleased him to see through the accompaniment, or counterpoint, of snow, the items of mere externality on his way. There were many kinds of bricks in the sidewalks, and laid in many kinds of pattern. The garden walls too were various, some of wooden palings, some of plaster, some of stone. Twigs of bushes leaned over the walls; the little hard green winter-buds of lilac, on gray stems, sheathed and fat; other branches very thin and fine and black and desiccated. Dirty sparrows huddled in the bushes, as dull in color as dead fruit left in leafless trees. A single starling creaked on a weather vane. In the gutter, beside a drain, was a scrap of torn and dirty newspaper, caught in a little delta of filth: the word ECZEMA appeared in large capitals, and below it was a letter from Mrs. Amelia D. Cravath, 2100 Pine Street, Fort Worth, Texas, to the effect that after being a sufferer for years she had been cured by Caley's Ointment. In the little delta, beside the fan-shaped and deeply runneled continent of brown mud, were lost twigs, descended from their parent trees, dead matches, a rusty horse-chestnut burr, a small concentration of sparkling gravel on the lip of the sewer, a fragment of eggshell, a streak of yellow sawdust which had been wet and was now dry and congealed, a brown pebble, and a broken feather. Further on was a cement sidewalk, ruled into geometrical parallelograms, with a brass inlay at one end commemorating the contractors who had laid it, and, halfway across, an irregular and random series of dog-tracks, immortalized in synthetic stone. He knew these well, and always stepped on them; to cover the little hollows with his own foot had always been a queer pleasure; today he did it once more, but perfunctorily and detachedly, all the while thinking of something else. That was a dog, a long time ago, who had made a mistake and walked on the cement while it was still wet. He had probably wagged his tail, but that hadn't been recorded. Now, Paul Hasleman, aged twelve, on his way home from school, crossed the same river, which in the meantime had frozen into rock. Homeward through the snow, the snow falling in bright sunshine. Homeward?

Then came the gateway with the two posts surmounted by egg-shaped stones which had been cunningly balanced on their ends, as if by Columbus, and mortared in the very act of balance: a source of perpetual wonder. On the brick wall just beyond, the letter H had been stenciled, presumably for some purpose. H? H.

The green hydrant, with a little green-painted chain attached to the brass screw-cap.

The elm tree, with the great gray wound in the bark, kidney-shaped, into which he always put his hand—to feel the cold but living wood. The injury, he had been sure, was due to the gnawings of a tethered horse. But now it deserved only a passing palm, a merely tolerant eye. There were more important things. Miracles. Beyond the thoughts of trees, mere elms. Beyond the thoughts of sidewalks, mere stone, mere brick, mere cement. Beyond

the thoughts even of his own shoes, which trod these sidewalks obediently, bearing a burden—far above—of elaborate mystery. He watched them. They were not very well polished; he had neglected them, for a very good reason: they were one of the many parts of the increasing difficulty of the daily return to daily life, the morning struggle. To get up, having at last opened one's eyes, to go to the window, and discover no snow, to wash, to dress, to descend the curving stairs to breakfast—

At whatever pain to others, nevertheless, one must persevere in severance, since the incommunicability of the experience demanded it. It was desirable of course to be kind to Mother and Father, especially as they seemed to be worried, but it was also desirable to be resolute. If they should decide—as appeared likely—to consult the doctor, Doctor Howells, and have Paul inspected, his heart listened to through a kind of dictaphone, his lungs, his stomach—well, that was all right. He would go through with it. He would give them answer for question, too—perhaps such answers as they hadn't expected? No. That would never do. For the secret world must, at all costs, be preserved.

The bird-house in the apple-tree was empty—it was the wrong time of year for wrens. The little round black door had lost its pleasure. The wrens were enjoying other houses, other nests, remoter trees. But this too was a notion which he only vaguely and grazingly entertained—as if, for the moment, he merely touched an edge of it; there was something further on, which was already assuming a sharper importance; something which already teased at the corners of his eyes, teasing also at the corner of his mind. It was funny to think that he so wanted this, so awaited it—and yet found himself enjoying this momentary dalliance with the bird-house, as if for a quite deliberate postponement and enhancement of the approaching pleasure. He was aware of his delay, of his smiling and detached and now almost uncomprehending gaze at the little bird-house; he knew what he was going to look at next: it was his own little cobbled hill-street, his own house, the little river at the bottom of the hill, the grocer's shop with the cardboard man in the window—and now, thinking of all this, he turned his head, still smiling, and looking quickly right and left through the snow-laden sunlight.

And the mist of snow, as he had foreseen, was still on it—a ghost of snow falling in the bright sunlight, softly and steadily floating and turning and pausing, soundlessly meeting the snow that covered, as with a transparent mirage, the bare bright cobbles. He loved it—he stood still and loved it. Its beauty was paralyzing—beyond all words, all experience, all dream. No fairy-story he had ever read could be compared with it—none had ever given him this extraordinary combination of ethereal loveliness with a something else, unnameable, which was just faintly and deliciously terrifying. What was this thing? As he thought of it, he looked upward toward his own bedroom window, which was open—and it was as if he looked straight into the room and saw himself lying half awake in his bed. There he was—at this very instant he was still perhaps actually there—more truly there than standing here at the edge of the cobbled hill-street, with one hand lifted to shade his eyes

against the snow-sun. Had he indeed ever left his room, in all this time? since that very first morning? Was the whole progress still being enacted there, was it still the same morning, and himself not yet wholly awake? And even now, had the postman not yet come round the corner? . . .

This idea amused him, and automatically, as he thought of it, he turned his head and looked toward the top of the hill. There was, of course, nothing there—nothing and no one. The street was empty and quiet. And all the more because of its emptiness it occurred to him to count the houses—a thing which, oddly enough, he hadn't before thought of doing. Of course, he had known there weren't many—many, that is, on his own side of the street, which were the ones that figured in the postman's progress—but nevertheless it came to him as something of a shock to find that there were precisely *six*, above his own house—his own house was the seventh.

Six!

Astonished, he looked at his own house—looked at the door, on which was the number thirteen—and then realized that the whole thing was exactly and logically and absurdly what he ought to have known. Just the same, the realization gave him abruptly, and even a little frighteningly, a sense of hurry. He was being hurried—he was being rushed. For—he knit his brows—he couldn't be mistaken—it was just above the *seventh* house, his *own* house, that the postman had first been audible this very morning. But in that case—in that case—did it mean that tomorrow he would hear nothing? The knock he had heard must have been the knock of their own door. Did it mean—and this was an idea which gave him a really extraordinary feeling of surprise—that he would never hear the postman again?—that tomorrow morning the postman would already have passed the house, in a snow by then so deep as to render his footsteps completely inaudible? That he would have made his approach down the snow-filled street so soundlessly, so secretly, that he, Paul Hasleman, there lying in bed, would not have waked in time, or, waking, would have heard nothing?

But how could that be? Unless even the knocker should be muffled in the snow—frozen tight, perhaps? . . . But in that case—

A vague feeling of disappointment came over him; a vague sadness, as if he felt himself deprived of something which he had long looked forward to, something much prized. After all this, all this beautiful progress, the slow delicious advance of the postman through the silent and secret snow, the knock creeping closer each day, and the footsteps nearer, the audible compass of the world thus daily narrowed, narrowed, narrowed, as the snow soothingly and beautifully encroached and deepened, after all this, was he to be defrauded of the one thing he had so wanted—to be able to count, as it were, the last two or three solemn footsteps, as they finally approached his own door? Was it all going to happen, at the end, so suddenly? or indeed, had it already happened? with no slow and subtle gradations of menace, in which he could luxuriate?

He gazed upward again, toward his own window which flashed in the sun: and this time almost with a feeling that it would be better if he *were* still in

bed, in that room; for in that case this must still be the first morning, and there would be six more mornings to come—or, for that matter, seven or eight or nine—how could he be sure?—or even more.

3

After supper, the inquisition began. He stood before the doctor, under the lamp, and submitted silently to the usual thumpings and tappings.

"Now will you please say 'Ah!'?"

"Ah!"

"Now again please, if you don't mind."

"Ah."

"Say it slowly, and hold it if you can—"

"Ah-h-h-h-h—"

"Good."

How silly all this was. As if it had anything to do with his throat! Or his heart or lungs!

Relaxing his mouth, of which the corners, after all this absurd stretching, felt uncomfortable, he avoided the doctor's eyes, and stared towards the fireplace, past his mother's feet (in gray slippers) which projected from the green chair, and his father's feet (in brown slippers) which stood neatly side by side on the hearth rug.

"Hm. There is certainly nothing wrong there . . ."

He felt the doctor's eyes fixed upon him, and, as if merely to be polite, returned the look, but with a feeling of justifiable evasiveness.

"Now, young man, tell me,—do you feel all right?"

"Yes, sir, quite all right."

"No headaches? no dizziness?"

"No, I don't think so."

"Let me see. Let's get a book, if you don't mind—yes, thank you, that will do splendidly—and now, Paul, if you'll just read it, holding it as you would normally hold it—"

He took the book and read:

"And another praise have I to tell for this the city our mother, the gift of a great god, a glory of the land most high; the might of horses, the might of young horses, the might of the sea. . . . For thou, son of Cronus, our lord Poseidon, hast throned herein this pride, since in these roads first thou didst show forth the curb that cures the rage of steeds. And the shapely oar, apt to men's hands, hath a wondrous speed on the brine, following the hundred-footed Nereids. . . . O land that art praised above all lands, now is it for thee to make those bright praises seen in deeds."

He stopped, tentatively, and lowered the heavy book.

"No—as I thought—there is certainly no superficial sign of eye-strain."

Silence thronged the room, and he was aware of the focused scrutiny of the three people who confronted him. . . .

"We could have his eyes examined—but I believe it is something else."

"What could it be?" This was his father's voice.

"It's only this curious absent-minded—" This was his mother's voice.

In the presence of the doctor, they both seemed irritatingly apologetic.

"I believe it is something else. Now, Paul—I would like very much to ask you a question or two. You will answer them, won't you—you know I'm an old, old friend of yours, eh? That's right! . . ."

His back was thumped twice by the doctor's fat fist,—then the doctor was grinning at him with false amiability, while with one finger-nail he was scratching the top button of his waistcoat. Beyond the doctor's shoulder was the fire, the fingers of flame making light prestidigitation against the sooty fireback, the soft sound of their random flutter the only sound.

"I would like to know—is there anything that worries you?"

The doctor was again smiling, his eyelids low against the little black pupils, in each of which was a tiny white bead of light. Why answer him? why answer him at all? "At whatever pain to others"—but it was all a nuisance, this necessity for resistance, this necessity for attention: it was as if one had been stood up on a brilliantly lighted stage, under a great round blaze of spotlight; as if one were merely a trained seal, or a performing dog, or a fish, dipped out of an aquarium and held up by the tail. It would serve them right if he were merely to bark or growl. And meanwhile, to miss these last few precious hours, these hours of which every minute was more beautiful than the last, more menacing—? He still looked, as if from a great distance, at the beads of light in the doctor's eyes, at the fixed false smile, and then, beyond, once more at his mother's slippers, his father's slippers, the soft flutter of the fire. Even here, even amongst these hostile presences, and in this arranged light, he could see the snow, he could hear it—it was in the corners of the room, where the shadow was deepest, under the sofa, behind the half-opened door which led to the dining room. It was gentler here, softer, its seethe the quietest of whispers, as if, in deference to a drawing room, it had quite deliberately put on its "manners"; it kept itself out of sight, obliterated itself, but distinctly with an air of saying, "Ah, but just wait! Wait till we are alone together! Then I will begin to tell you something new! Something white! something cold! something sleepy! something of cease, and peace, and the long bright curve of space! Tell them to go away. Banish them. Refuse to speak. Leave them, go upstairs to your room, turn out the light and get into bed—I will go with you, I will be waiting for you, I will tell you a better story than Little Kay of the Skates, or The Snow Ghost—I will surround your bed, I will close the windows, pile a deep drift against the door, so that none will ever again be able to enter. Speak to them! . . ." It seemed as if the little hissing voice came from a slow white spiral of falling flakes in the corner by the front window—but he could not be sure. He felt himself smiling, then, and said to the doctor, but without looking at him, looking beyond him still—

"Oh, no, I think not—"

"But are you sure, my boy?"

His father's voice came softly and coldly then—the familiar voice of silken warning. . . .

"You needn't answer at once, Paul—remember we're trying to help you—think it over and be quite sure, won't you?"

He felt himself smiling again, at the notion of being quite sure. What a joke! As if he weren't so sure that reassurance was no longer necessary, and all this cross-examination a ridiculous farce, a grotesque parody! What could they know about it? These gross intelligences, these humdrum minds so bound to the usual, the ordinary? Impossible to tell them about it! Why, even now, even now, with the proof so abundant, so formidable, so imminent, so appallingly present here in this very room, could they believe it?—could even his mother believe it? No—it was only too plain that if anything were said about it, the merest hint given, they would be incredulous—they would laugh—they would say "Absurd!"—think things about him which weren't true. . . .

"Why, no, I'm not worried—why should I be?"

He looked then straight at the doctor's low-lidded eyes, looked from one of them to the other, from one bead of light to the other, and gave a little laugh.

The doctor seemed to be disconcerted by this. He drew back in his chair, resting a fat white hand on either knee. The smile faded slowly from his face.

"Well, Paul!" he said, and paused gravely. "I'm afraid you don't take this quite seriously enough. I think you perhaps don't quite realize—don't quite realize—" He took a deep quick breath, and turned, as if helplessly, at a loss for words, to the others. But Mother and Father were both silent—no help was forthcoming.

"You must surely know, be aware, that you have not been quite yourself of late? don't you know that? . . ."

It was amusing to watch the doctor's renewed attempt at a smile, a queer disorganized look, as of confidential embarrassment.

"I feel all right, sir," he said, and again gave the little laugh.

"And we're trying to help you." The doctor's tone sharpened.

"Yes, sir, I know. But why? I'm all right. I'm just *thinking*, that's all."

His mother made a quick movement forward, resting a hand on the back of the doctor's chair.

"Thinking?" she said. "But my dear, about what?"

This was a direct challenge—and would have to be directly met. But before he met it, he looked again into the corner by the door, as if for reassurance. He smiled again at what he saw, at what he heard. The little spiral was still there, still softly whirling, like the ghost of a white kitten chasing the ghost of a white tail, and making as it did so the faintest of whispers. It was all right! If only he could remain firm, everything was going to be all right.

"Oh, about anything, about nothing,—*you* know the way you do!"

"You mean—day-dreaming?"

"Oh, no—thinking!"

"But thinking about *what*?"

"Anything."

He laughed a third time—but this time, happening to glance upward towards his mother's face, he was appalled at the effect his laughter seemed to have upon her. Her mouth had opened in an expression of horror. . . . This was too bad! Unfortunate! He had known it would cause pain, of course—but he hadn't expected it to be quite so bad as this. Perhaps—perhaps if he just gave them a tiny gleaming hint—?

"About the snow," he said.

"What on earth!" This was his father's voice. The brown slippers came a step nearer on the hearth-rug.

"But my dear, what do you mean!" This was his mother's voice.

The doctor merely stared.

"Just *snow*, that's all. I like to think about it."

"Tell us about it, my boy."

"But that's all it is. There's nothing to tell. *You* know what snow is?"

This he said almost angrily, for he felt that they were trying to corner him. He turned sideways so as no longer to face the doctor, and the better to see the inch of blackness between the window-sill and the lowered curtain,—the cold inch of beckoning and delicious night. At once he felt better, more assured.

"Mother—can I go to bed, now, please? I've got a headache."

"But I thought you said—"

"It's just come. It's all these questions—! Can I, mother?"

"You can go as soon as the doctor has finished."

"Don't you think this thing ought to be gone into thoroughly, and *now*?" This was Father's voice. The brown slippers again came a step nearer, the voice was the well-known "punishment" voice, resonant and cruel.

"Oh, what's the use, Norman—"

Quite suddenly, everyone was silent. And without precisely facing them, nevertheless he was aware that all three of them were watching him with an extraordinary intensity—staring hard at him—as if he had done something monstrous, or was himself some kind of monster. He could hear the soft irregular flutter of the flames; the cluck-click-cluck-click of the clock; far and faint, two sudden spurts of laughter from the kitchen, as quickly cut off as begun; a murmur of water in the pipes; and then, the silence seemed to deepen, to spread out, to become world-long and worldwide, to become timeless and shapeless, and to center inevitably and rightly, with a slow and sleepy but enormous concentration of all power, on the beginning of a new sound. What this new sound was going to be, he knew perfectly well. It might begin with a hiss, but it would end with a roar—there was no time to lose—he must escape. It mustn't happen here—

Without another word, he turned and ran up the stairs.

4

Not a moment too soon. The darkness was coming in long white waves. A prolonged sibilance filled the night—a great seamless seethe of wild influence went abruptly across it—a cold low humming shook the windows. He shut the door and flung off his clothes in the dark. The bare black floor was like a little raft tossed in waves of snow, almost overwhelmed, washed under whitely, up again, smothered in curled billows of feather. The snow was laughing: it spoke from all sides at once: it pressed closer to him as he ran and jumped exulting into his bed.

“Listen to us!” it said. “Listen! We have come to tell you the story we told you about. You remember? Lie down. Shut your eyes, now—you will no longer see much—in this white darkness who could see, or want to see? We will take the place of everything. . . . Listen—”

A beautiful varying dance of snow began at the front of the room, came forward and then retreated, flattened out toward the floor, then rose fountain-like to the ceiling, swayed, recruited itself from a new stream of flakes which poured laughing in through the humming window, advanced again, lifted long white arms. It said peace, it said remoteness, it said cold—it said—

But then a gash of horrible light fell brutally across the room from the opening door—the snow drew back hissing—something alien had come into the room—something hostile. This thing rushed at him, clutched at him, shook him—and he was not merely horrified, he was filled with such a loathing as he had never known. What was this? this cruel disturbance? this act of anger and hate? It was as if he had to reach up a hand toward another world for any understanding of it,—an effort of which he was only barely capable. But of that other world he still remembered just enough to know the exorcising words. They tore themselves from his other life suddenly—

“Mother! Mother! Go away! I hate you!”

And with that effort, everything was solved, everything became all right: the seamless hiss advanced once more, the long white wavering lines rose and fell like enormous whispering sea-waves, the whisper becoming louder, the laughter more numerous.

“Listen!” it said. “We’ll tell you the last, the most beautiful and secret story—shut your eyes—it is a very small story—a story that gets smaller and smaller—it comes inward instead of opening like a flower—it is a flower becoming a seed—a little cold seed—do you hear? we are leaning closer to you—”

The hiss was now becoming a roar—the whole world was a vast moving screen of snow—but even now it said peace, it said remoteness, it said cold, it said sleep.

WILLIAM SAROYAN (*b. 1908*) sounded the keynote of his life and works in the title of one of his first successful short stories, "*The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze*." Energetic originality, genuine humor, deep human sympathy, and simple honesty raise his best work far above the boyish boisterousness and youthful affectation of his worst. The stories in *My Name Is Aram* (1940; it contains "*The Journey to Hanford*") and the short novel, *The Human Comedy* (1942), are less uneven in quality than the many earlier volumes. His unusual but often moving plays, including *My Heart's in the Highlands* (1939), *The Time of Your Life* (1940), *Love's Old Sweet Song* (1940), and *The Beautiful People* (1941), are also pure Saroyan.

THE JOURNEY TO HANFORD

THE TIME came one year for my sad uncle Jorgi to fix his bicycle and ride twenty-seven miles to Hanford, where it seems there was a job. I went with him, although at first there was talk of sending my cousin Vask instead.

The family didn't want to complain about having among its members a fool like Jorgi, but at the same time it wanted a chance, in the summertime, to forget him for a while. If he went away and got himself a job in Hanford, in the watermelons, all would be well. Jorgi would earn a little money and at the same time be out of the way. That was the important thing—to get him out of the way.

To hell with him and his zither both, my grandfather said. When you read in a book that a man sits all day under a tree and plays a zither and sings, believe me, that writer is an impractical man. Money, that's the thing. Let him go and sweat under the sun for a while. Him and his zither both.

You say that now, my grandmother said, but wait a week. Wait till you begin to need music again.

That is nonsense, my grandfather said. When you read in a book that a man who sings is one who is truly a happy man, that writer is a dreamer, not a merchant in a thousand years. Let him go. It is twenty-seven miles to Hanford. That is a good intelligent distance.

You speak that way *now*, my grandmother said, but in three days you'll be a melancholy man. I shall see you walking about like a tiger. I am the one who shall see that. Seeing that, I am the one who shall laugh.

You are a woman, my grandfather said. When you read in a book with hundreds of pages of small print that a woman is truly a creature of wonder, that writer has turned his face from his wife and is dreaming. Let him go.

"The Journey to Hanford," from *My Name Is Aram*, copyright, 1940, by William Saroyan. By permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

It is simply that you are not young any longer, my grandmother said. That is the thing that is making you roar.

Close your mouth, my grandfather said. Close it, or here comes the back of my hand.

My grandfather looked about the room at his children and grandchildren.

I say he goes to Hanford on his bicycle, he said. What do you say?

Nobody spoke.

Then that's settled, my grandfather said. Now, whom shall we send with him? Which of the uncouth of our children shall we punish by sending him with Jorgi to Hanford? When you read in a book that a journey to another city is a pleasant experience for a young man, that writer is probably a man of eighty or ninety who as a child once went in a wagon two miles from home. Whom shall we punish? Vask? Shall Vask be the one? Step up here, boy.

My cousin Vask got up from the floor and stood in front of the old man, who looked down at him furiously, twisted his enormous mustaches, cleared his throat, and put his hand over the boy's face. His hand practically covered the whole head. Vask didn't move.

Shall you go with your uncle Jorgi to Hanford? my grandfather said.

If it pleases my grandfather, I shall, Vask said.

The old man began to make faces, thinking it over.

Let me think a moment, he said. Jorgi's spirit is the foolish one of our tribe. Yours is also. Is it wise to put two fools together?

He turned to the others.

Let me hear your spoken thoughts on this theme, he said. Is it wise to put a grown fool and a growing one together, of the same tribe? Will it profit anyone? Speak aloud so I may consider.

I think it would be the natural thing to do, my uncle Zorab said. A fool and a fool. The man to work, the boy to keep house and cook.

Perhaps, my grandfather said. Let's consider. A fool and a fool, one to work, the other to keep house and cook. Can you cook, boy?

Of course he can cook, my grandmother said. Rice, at least.

Is that true, boy, about the rice? my grandfather said. Four cups of water, one cup of rice, one teaspoonful of salt. Do you know about the trick of making it come out like food instead of swill, or are we dreaming?

Of course he can cook rice, my grandmother said.

The back of my hand is on its way to your mouth, my grandfather said. Let the boy speak for himself. He has a tongue. Can you do it, boy? When you read in a book that a boy answers an old man wisely, that writer is probably a Jew, bent on exaggeration. Can you make it come out like food, not swill?

I have cooked rice, Vask said. It came out like food.

Was there enough salt to it? my grandfather said. If you lie, remember my hand.

Vask hesitated a moment.

I understand, my grandfather said. You are embarrassed about the rice. What was wrong with it? Truth is all that pleases me. Speak up fearlessly.

If it is the truth fearlessly, no man can demand more. What embarrasses you about the rice?

It was too salty, Vask said. We had to drink water all day and all night, it was so salty.

No elaboration, my grandfather said. Only what is true. The rice was too salty. Naturally you had to drink water all day and all night. We've all eaten that kind of rice. Don't think because you drank water all day and all night that you are the first Armenian who ever did that. Just tell me that it was too salty. I'm not here to learn. I *know*. Just say it was too salty and let me try to determine if you are the one to go.

My grandfather turned to the others. He began to make faces again.

I think this is the boy to go, he said, but speak up, if you have something to say. Salty is better than swill. Was it light in texture, boy?

It was light in texture, Vask said.

I believe this is the one to send, my grandfather said. The water is good for the gut. Shall it be this boy, Vask Garoghlanian, or who?

On second thought, my uncle Zorab said, two fools, out and out, perhaps not, although the rice is not swill. I nominate Aram. Perhaps he should go. He deserves to be punished.

Everybody looked at me.

Aram? my grandfather said. You mean the boy who laughs? You mean loud-laughing Aram Garoghlanian?

Whom else would he mean? my grandmother said. You know very well whom he means.

My grandfather turned slowly and for half a minute looked at my grandmother.

When you read in a book, he said, about some man who falls in love with a girl and marries her, that writer is truly referring to a very young man who has no idea she is going to talk out of turn right up to the time she is ready to go into the ground at the age of ninety-seven. That writer is thinking of a younger type of man.

Do you mean Aram? he said. Aram Garoghlanian?

Yes, my uncle Zorab said.

What has he done to deserve this awful punishment? my grandfather said.

He knows, my uncle Zorab said.

Aram Garoghlanian, my grandfather said.

I got up and stood in front of my grandfather. He put his big hand over my face and rubbed it. I knew he was not angry.

What have you done, boy? he said.

I began to laugh, remembering the things I had done. My grandfather listened a moment and then began laughing with me.

Only he and I laughed. The others didn't dare laugh. My grandfather had instructed them not to laugh unless they could laugh like him. I was the only other Garoghlanian in the world who laughed that way.

Aram Garoghlanian, my grandfather said, tell me. What have you done?

Which one? I said.

My grandfather turned to my uncle Zorab.

Which one? he said. Tell the boy which mischief to acknowledge. There appear to be several.

He knows which one, my uncle Zorab said.

Do you mean, I said, telling the neighbors you are crazy?

My uncle Zorab refused to speak.

Or do you mean, I said, going around talking the way you talk?

This is the boy to send with Jorgi, my uncle Zorab said.

Can you cook rice? my grandfather said.

He didn't care to go into detail about my making fun of my uncle Zorab. If I could cook rice, I should go with Jorgi to Hanford. That was what it came to. Of course I *wanted* to go, no matter what the writer was who wrote that it was a fine experience for a boy to travel. Fool or liar or anything else, I *wanted* to go.

I can cook rice, I said.

Salty or swill, or what? my grandfather said.

Sometimes salty, I said. Sometimes swill. Sometimes perfect.

Let's consider, my grandfather said.

He leaned against the wall, considering.

Three large glasses of water, he said to my grandmother.

My grandmother went to the kitchen and after a moment returned with three large glasses of water on a tray. My grandfather drank one glass after another, then turned to the others, making many thoughtful faces.

Sometimes salty, he said. Sometimes swill. Sometimes perfect. Is this the boy to send to Hanford?

Yes, my uncle Zorab said. The only one.

So be it, my grandfather said. That will be all. I wish to be alone.

I moved to go. My grandfather took me by the neck.

Stay a moment, he said.

When we were alone he said, Talk the way your uncle Zorab talks.

I did so and my grandfather roared with laughter.

Go to Hanford, he said. Go with the fool Jorgi and make it salty or make it swill or make it perfect.

In this manner I was assigned to be my uncle Jorgi's companion on his journey to Hanford.

We set out the following morning before daybreak. I sat on the crossbar of the bicycle and my uncle Jorgi on the seat, but when I got tired I got off and walked, and after a while my uncle Jorgi got off and walked, and I rode. We didn't reach Hanford till late that afternoon.

We were supposed to stay in Hanford till the job ended, after the watermelon season. That was the idea. We went around town looking for a house to stay in, a house with a stove in it, gas connections, and water. We didn't care about electricity, but we wanted gas and water. We saw six or seven houses and then we saw one my uncle Jorgi liked, so we moved in that night. It was an eleven-room house, with a gas stove, a sink with running water, and a room with a bed and a couch. The other rooms were all empty. My uncle

Jorgi lighted a candle, brought out his zither, sat on the floor, and began to play and sing. It was beautiful. It was melancholy sometimes and sometimes funny, but it was always beautiful. I don't know how long he played and sang before he realized he was hungry, but all of a sudden he got up off the floor and said, Aram, I want rice.

I made a pot of rice that night that was both salty and swill, but my uncle Jorgi said, Aram, this is wonderful.

The birds got us up at daybreak.

The job, I said. You begin today, you know.

Today, my uncle Jorgi groaned.

He walked tragically out of the empty house and I looked around for a broom. There was no broom, so I went out and sat on the steps of the front porch. It seemed to be a nice region of the world in daylight. It was a street with only four houses. There was a church steeple in front of the house, two blocks away. I sat on the porch about an hour. My uncle Jorgi came up the street, on his bicycle, zigzagging with joy unconfined.

Not this year, thank God, he said.

He fell off his bicycle into a rose bush.

What? I said.

There is no job, he said. No job, thank God.

He smelled a rose.

No job? I said.

No job, thank our Heavenly Father, he said.

He looked at the rose, smiling.

Why not? I said.

The watermelons, he said.

What about them? I said.

The season is over, he said.

That isn't true, I said.

The season is over, my uncle Jorgi said. Believe me, it is over.

Your father will break your head, I said.

The season is over, he said. Praise God, the watermelons are all harvested.

Who said so? I said.

The farmer himself. The farmer himself said so, my uncle Jorgi said.

He just said that, I said. He didn't want to hurt your feelings. He just said that because he knew your heart wouldn't be in your work.

Praise God, my uncle Jorgi said, the whole season is over. All the fine, ripe watermelons have been harvested.

What are we going to do? I said. The season is just beginning.

It's ended, he said. We shall dwell in this house a month and then go home. We have paid six dollars rent and we have money enough for rice. We shall dream here a month and then go home.

With no money, I said.

But in good health, he said. Praise God, who ripened them so early this year.

My uncle Jorgi danced into the house to his zither, and before I could decide what to do about him he was playing and singing. It was so beautiful I

didn't even get up and try to chase him out of the house. I just sat on the porch and listened.

We stayed in the house a month and then went home. My grandmother was the first to see us.

It's about time you two came home, she said. He's been raging like a tiger. Give me the money.

There is no money, I said.

Did he work? my grandmother said.

No, I said. He played and sang the whole month.

How did your rice turn out? she said.

Sometimes salty, I said. Sometimes swill. Sometimes perfect. But he didn't work.

His father mustn't know, she said. I have money.

She lifted her dress and got some currency out of a pocket in her pants and put it in my hands.

When he comes home, she said, give him this money.

She looked at me a moment, then added: *Aram Garoghlanian*.

I will do as you say, I said.

When my grandfather came home he began to roar.

Home already? he said. Is the season ended so soon? Where is the money he earned?

I gave him the money.

I won't have him singing all day, my grandfather roared. There is a limit to everything. When you read in a book that a father loves a foolish son more than his wise sons, that writer is a bachelor.

In the yard, under the almond tree, my uncle Jorgi began to play and sing. My grandfather came to a dead halt and began to listen. He sat down on the couch, took off his shoes, and began to make faces.

I went into the kitchen to get three or four glasses of water to quench the thirst from last night's rice. When I came back to the parlor the old man was stretched out on the couch, asleep and smiling, and his son Jorgi was singing hallelujah to the universe at the top of his beautiful, melancholy voice.

GEORGE MILBURN (*b. 1906*) *writes straightforward but usually ironic stories, often of small-town life in Oklahoma. They have been collected in Oklahoma (1931), No More Trumpets and Other Stories (1933), from which "The Apostate" is taken, and Catalogue (1936).*

THE APOSTATE

HARRY, you been jacking me up about how I been neglecting Rotary here lately, so I'm just going to break down and tell you something. Now I don't want you to take this personal, Harry, because it's not meant personal at all. No siree! Not *a-tall*! But, just between you and I, Harry, I'm not going to be coming out to Rotary lunches any more. I mean I'm quitting Rotary! . . .

Now whoa there! Whoa! Whoa just a minute and let me get in a word edgeways. Just let me finish my little say.

Don't you never take it into your head that I haven't been wrestling with this thing plenty. I mean I've argued it all out with myself. Now I'm going to tell you the whyfor and the whereof and the howcome about this, Harry, but kindly don't let what I say go no further. Please keep it strictly on the Q.T. Because I guess the rest of the boys would suspicion that I was turning high-brow on them. But you've always been a buddy to me, Harry, you mangy old son of a hoss thief, you, so what I'm telling you is the straight dope.

Harry, like you no doubt remember, up till a few months ago Rotary was about "the most fondest thing I is of," as the nigger says. There wasn't nothing that stood higher for me than Rotary.

Well, here, about a year ago last fall I took a trip down to the university to visit my son and go to a football game. You know Hubert Junior, my boy. Sure. Well, this is his second year down at the university. Yes sir, that boy is getting a college education. I mean, I'm all for youth having a college education.

Of course I think there is such a thing as too much education working a detriment. Take, for instance, some of these longhairs running around knocking the country right now. But what I mean is, a good, sound, substantial college education. I don't mean a string of letters a yard long for a man to write after his John Henry. I just mean that I want my boy to have his sheepskin, they call it, before he starts out in the world. Like the fellow says, I want him to get his A.B. degree, and then he can go out and get his J.O.B.

Now, Harry, I always felt like a father has got certain responsibilities to his son. That's just good Rotary. That's all that is. You know that that's just

"The Apostate," from *No More Trumpets and Other Stories* by George Milburn. Copyright, 1933, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

good Rotary yourself, Harry. Well, I always wanted Hubert to think about me just like I was a pal to him, or say an older brother, maybe. Hubert always knew that all he had to do was come to me, and I would act like a big buddy to him, irregardless.

Well, like I was telling you, Harry, I started Hubert in to the university two years ago, and after he had been there about two months, I thought I would run down and see how he was getting along and go to a football game. So I and Mrs. T. drove over one Friday. We didn't know the town very well, so we stopped at a filling station, and I give Hubert a ring, and he come right on down to where we was to show us the way. Just as soon as he come up, I could see right then that he had something on his mind bothering him.

He called me aside and took me into the filling-station rest-room, and says: "For the love of God, Dad, take that Rotary button out of your coat lapel," he says to me.

Harry, that come as a big surprise to me, and I don't mind telling you that it just about took the wind out of my sails. But I wasn't going to let on to him, so I rared back on my dignity, and says, "Why, what do you mean, take that Rotary button out of my lapel, young man?" I says to him.

"Dad," Hubert says to me, serious, "any frat house has always got a few cynics in it. If you was to wear that Rotary button in your lapel out to the frat house, just as soon as you got out of sight, some of those boys at the house would razz the life out of me," he says.

"Hubert," I says, "there's not a thing that this lapel badge represents that any decent, moral person could afford to make fun of. If that's the kind of Reds you got out at your fraternity, the kind that would razz a what you might call sacred thing—yes sir, a sacred thing—like Rotary, well I and your mamma can just go somewheres else and put up. I don't guess the hotels have quit running," I says to him.

By now I was on my high horse right, see?

"Now, Dad," Hubert says, "it's not that. I mean, person'ly I'm awful proud of you. It's just that I haven't been pledged to this fraternity long, see, and when some of those older members found out you was a Rotarian they would deal me a lot of misery, and I couldn't say nothing. Person'ly I think Rotary is all right," he says to me.

"Well, you better, son," I says, "or I'm going to begin to think that you're sick in the head."

The way he explained it, though, Harry, that made it a horse of a different tail, as the saying goes, so I give in and took off my Rotary button right there. Stuck it in my pocket, see? So we went on out and visited at Hubert's fraternity house, and do you know that those boys just got around there and treated we folks like we was princes of the blood. I mean you would have thought that I was an old ex-graduate of that university. And we saw the big pigskin tussle the next day, fourteen to aught, favor us, and we had such a scrumptious time all around I forgot all about what Hubert had said.

Ever'thing would of been all right, except for what happened later. I guess some of those older boys at the frat house begin using their form of psychology

on Hubert. I mean they finely got his mind set against Rotary, because when he come home for the summer vacation that was about the size of things.

I mean all last summer I thought Hubert never would let up. He just kept it up, making sarcastic remarks about Rotary, see? Even when we was on our vacation trip. You know we drove out to California and back last summer, Harry. Come back with the same air in the tires we started out with. Well, I thought it would be kind of nice to drop in and eat with the Hollywood Rotary—you know, just to be able to say I had. Well, do you know that that boy Hubert made so much fun of the idea I just had to give it up? That was the way it was the whole trip. He got his mother around on his side, too. Just to be frank with you, I never got so sick and tired of anything in all my born days.

Well, Harry, I had my dander up there for a while, and all the bickering in the world couldn't of shook me from my stand. But finely Hubert went back to college in September, and I thought I would have a little peace. Then I just got to thinking about it, and it all come over me. "Look here, Mister Man," I says to myself, "your faith and loyalty to Rotary may be a fine thing, and all that, but it's just costing you the fellowship of your own son." Now a man can't practice Rotary in the higher sense, and yet at the same time be letting his own son's fellowship get loose from him. So there it was. Blood's thicker than water, Harry. You'll have to admit that.

Right along in there, Harry, was the first time I begin to attending meetings irregular. I'll tell you—you might not think so—but it was a pretty tough struggle for me. I remember one Monday noon, Rotary-meeting day, I happened to walk past the Hotel Beckman just at lunchtime. The windows of the Venetian Room was open, and I could hear you boys singing a Rotary song. You know that one we sing set to the tune of "Last Night on the Back Porch." It goes:

I love the Lions in the morning,
The Exchange Club at night,
I love the Y's men in the evening,
And Kiwanis are all right . . .

Well, I couldn't carry a tune if I had it in a sack, but anyway that's the way it goes. So I just stopped in my tracks and stood there listening to that song coming out of the Hotel Beckman dining room. And when the boys come to the last verse,

I love the Optimists in the springtime,
The Ad Club in the fall,
But each day—and in every way—
I love Rotary best of all. . . .

I tell you, Harry, that just got me. I had a lump in my throat big enough to choke a cow. The tears begin coming up in my eyes, and it might sound ridiculous to hear me tell it now, but I could of broke down and bawled right there on the street. I got a grip on myself and walked on off, but right then I says to myself, "The hell with Hubert and his highbrow college-fraternity ideas; I'm going back to Rotary next week."

Well, I did go back the next week, and what happened decided me on taking the step I decided on. Here's what decided me. You know, I never got very well acquainted with Gay Harrison, the new secretary. I mean, of course, I know him all right, but he hasn't been in Rotary only but about a year. Well, on that particular day, I just happened to let my tongue slip and called him Mister Harrison, instead of by his nickname. Well, of course, the boys slapped a dollar fine on me right then and there. I haven't got no kick to make about that, but the point is, I had a letter from Hubert in my pocket right then, telling me that he had run short of money. So I just couldn't help but be struck by the idea "I wish I was giving Hubert this dollar." So that's what decided me on devoting my time and finances to another kind of fellowship, Harry.

I get down to the university to see Hubert more frequent now. I make it a point to. And the boys come to me, and I been helping them a little on their frat building fund. There's a fine spirit of fellowship in an organization like that. Some boys from the best families of the State are members, too. You might think from what I said that they'd be uppish, but they're not. No siree. Not a bit of it. I been down there enough for them to know me, now, and they all pound me on the back and call me H.T., just like I was one of them. And I do them, too. And I notice that when they sit down to a meal, they have some songs they sing just as lively and jolly as any we had at Rotary. Of course, like Hubert said, a few of them might have some wild-haired ideas about Rotary, but they're young yet. And as far as I can see there's not a knocker nor a sourbelly among them. Absolutely democratic.

It puts me in mind of a little incidence that happened last month when the frat threw a big Dad's Day banquet for us down there. All the fathers of the boys from all over the State was there. Well, to promote the spirit of fellowship between dad and son, the fraternity boys all agreed to call their dads by their first name, just treating the dads like big buddies. So at the table Hubert happened to forget for a minute, and says to me "Dad" something. Well sir, the president of the frat flashed right out, "All right, Hubie, we heard you call H.T. 'Dad.' So that'll just cost you a dollar for the ice-cream fund." Ever'body had a good laugh at Hubert getting caught like that, but do you know, that boy of mine just forked right over without making a kick. That shows the stuff, don't it, Harry? Nothing wrong with a boy like that.

And the whole bunch is like that, ever' one of them. I'll tell you, Harry, the boys at that frat of Hubert's are the builders in the coming generation. Any man of vision can see that.

Well, that's that. Now what was you going to say?

STEPHEN VINCENT BENET¹

TOO EARLY SPRING

I'M WRITING this down because I don't ever want to forget the way it was. It doesn't seem as if I could, now, but they all tell you things change. And I guess they're right. Older people must have forgotten or they couldn't be the way they are. And that goes for even the best ones, like Dad and Mr. Grant. They try to understand but they don't seem to know how. And the others make you feel dirty or else they make you feel like a goof. Till, pretty soon, you begin to forget yourself—you begin to think, "Well, maybe they're right and it was that way." And that's the end of everything. So I've got to write this down. Because they smashed it forever—but it wasn't the way they said.

Mr. Grant always says in comp. class: "Begin at the beginning." Only I don't know quite where the beginning was. We had a good summer at Big Lake but it was just the same summer. I worked pretty hard at the practice basket I rigged up in the barn, and I learned how to do the back jackknife. I'll never dive like Kerry but you want to be as all-around as you can. And, when I took my measurements, at the end of the summer, I was 5 ft. 9¾ and I'd gained 12 lbs. 6 oz. That isn't bad for going on sixteen and the old chest expansion was O.K. You don't want to get too heavy, because basketball's a fast game, but the year before was the year when I got my height, and I was so skinny, I got tired. But this year, Kerry helped me practice, a couple of times, and he seemed to think I had a good chance for the team. So I felt pretty set up—they'd never had a Sophomore on it before. And Kerry's a natural athlete, so that means a lot from him. He's a pretty good brother too. Most Juniors at State wouldn't bother with a fellow in High.

It sounds as if I were trying to run away from what I have to write down, but I'm not. I want to remember that summer, too, because it's the last happy one I'll ever have. Oh, when I'm an old man—thirty or forty—things may be all right again. But that's a long time to wait and it won't be the same.

And yet, that summer was different, too, in a way. So it must have started then, though I didn't know it. I went around with the gang as usual and we had a good time. But, every now and then, it would strike me we were acting like awful kids. They thought I was getting the big head, but I wasn't. It just

"Too Early Spring," from *Selected Works of Stephen Vincent Benét*, published by Farrar & Rinehart. Copyright, 1933, by The Butterick Company.

¹ See p. 315 for biographical sketch of Stephen Vincent Benét.

wasn't much fun—even going to the cave. It was like going on shooting marbles when you're in High.

I had sense enough not to try to tag after Kerry and his crowd. You can't do that. But when they all got out on the lake in canoes, warm evenings, and somebody brought a phonograph along, I used to go down to the Point, all by myself, and listen and listen. Maybe they'd be talking or maybe they'd be singing, but it all sounded mysterious across the water. I wasn't trying to hear what they said, you know. That's the kind of thing Tot Pickens does. I'd just listen, with my arms around my knees—and somehow it would hurt me to listen—and yet I'd rather do that than be with the gang.

I was sitting under the four pines, one night, right down by the edge of the water. There was a big moon and they were singing. It's funny how you can be unhappy and nobody know it but yourself.

I was thinking about Sheila Coe. She's Kerry's girl. They fight but they get along. She's awfully pretty and she can swim like a fool. Once Kerry sent me over with her tennis racket and we had quite a conversation. She was fine. And she didn't pull any of this big sister stuff, either, the way some girls will with a fellow's kid brother.

And when the canoe came along, by the edge of the lake, I thought for a moment it was her. I thought maybe she was looking for Kerry and maybe she'd stop and maybe she'd feel like talking to me again. I don't know why I thought that—I didn't have any reason. Then I saw it was just the Sharon kid, with a new kind of bob that made her look grown-up, and I felt sore. She didn't have any business out on the lake at her age. She was just a Sophomore in High, the same as me.

I chunked a stone in the water and it splashed right by the canoe, but she didn't squeal. She just said, "Fish," and chuckled. It struck me it was a kid's trick, trying to scare a kid.

"Hello, Helen," I said. "Where did you swipe the gunboat?"

"They don't know I've got it," she said. "Oh, hello, Chuck Peters. How's Big Lake?"

"All right," I said. "How was camp?"

"It was peachy," she said. "We had a peachy counselor, Miss Morgan. She was on the Wellesley field-hockey team."

"Well," I said, "we missed your society." Of course we hadn't, because they're across the lake and don't swim at our raft. But you ought to be polite.

"Thanks," she said. "Did you do the special reading for English? I thought it was dumb."

"It's always dumb," I said. "What canoe is that?"

"It's the old one," she said. "I'm not supposed to have it out at night. But you won't tell anybody, will you?"

"Be your age," I said. I felt generous. "I'll paddle a while, if you want," I said.

"All right," she said, so she brought it in and I got aboard. She went back in the bow and I took the paddle. I'm not strong on carting kids around, as a rule. But it was better than sitting there by myself.

"Where do you want to go?" I said.

"Oh, back towards the house," she said in a shy kind of voice. "I ought to, really. I just wanted to hear the singing."

"K.O.," I said. I didn't paddle fast, just let her slip. There was a lot of moon on the water. We kept around the edge so they wouldn't notice us. The singing sounded as if it came from a different country, a long way off.

She was a sensible kid, she didn't ask fool questions or giggle about nothing at all. Even when we went by Petters' Cove. That's where the lads from the bungalow colony go and it's pretty well populated on a warm night. You can hear them talking in low voices and now and then a laugh. Once Tot Pickens and a gang went over there with a flashlight, and a big Bohunk chased them for half a mile.

I felt funny, going by there with her. But I said, "Well, it's certainly Old Home Week"—in an offhand tone, because, after all, you've got to be sophisticated. And she said, "People are funny," in just the right sort of way. I took quite a shine to her after that and we talked. The Sharons have only been in town three years and somehow I'd never really noticed her before. Mrs. Sharon's awfully good-looking but she and Mr. Sharon fight. That's hard on a kid. And she was a quiet kid. She had a small kind of face and her eyes were sort of like a kitten's. You could see she got a great kick out of pretending to be grown-up—and yet it wasn't all pretending. A couple of times, I felt just as if I were talking to Sheila Coe. Only more comfortable, because, after all, we were the same age.

Do you know, after we put the canoe up, I walked all the way back home, around the lake? And most of the way, I ran. I felt swell too. I felt as if I could run forever and not stop. It was like finding something. I hadn't imagined anybody could ever feel the way I did about some things. And here was another person, even if it was a girl.

Kerry's door was open when I went by and he stuck his head out, and grinned.

"Well, kid," he said. "Stepping out?"

"Sure. With Greta Garbo," I said, and grinned back to show I didn't mean it. I felt sort of lightheaded, with the run and everything.

"Look here, kid—" he said, as if he was going to say something. Then he stopped. But there was a funny look on his face.

And yet I didn't see her again till we were both back in High. Mr. Sharon's uncle died, back East, and they closed the cottage suddenly. But all the rest of the time at Big Lake, I kept remembering that night and her little face. If I'd seen her in daylight, first, it might have been different. No, it wouldn't have been.

All the same, I wasn't even thinking of her when we bumped into each other, the first day of school. It was raining and she had on a green slicker and her hair was curly under her hat. We grinned and said hello and had to run. But something happened to us, I guess.

I'll say this now—it wasn't like Tot Pickens and Mabel Palmer. It wasn't like Junior David and Betty Page—though they've been going together ever

since kindergarten. It wasn't like any of those things. We didn't get sticky and sloppy. It wasn't like going with a girl.

Gosh, there'd be days and days when we'd hardly see each other, except in class. I had basketball practice almost every afternoon and sometimes evenings and she was taking music lessons four times a week. But you don't have to be always twos-ing with a person, if you feel that way about them. You seem to know the way they're thinking and feeling, the way you know yourself.

Now let me describe her. She had that little face and the eyes like a kitten's. When it rained, her hair curled all over the back of her neck. Her hair was yellow. She wasn't a tall girl but she wasn't chunky—just light and well made and quick. She was awfully alive without being nervous—she never bit her fingernails or chewed the end of her pencil, but she'd answer quicker than anyone in the class. Nearly everybody liked her, but she wasn't best friends with any particular girl, the mushy way they get. The teachers all thought a lot of her, even Miss Eagles. Well, I had to spoil that.

If we'd been like Tot and Mabel, we could have had a lot more time together, I guess. But Helen isn't a liar and I'm not a snake. It wasn't easy, going over to her house, because Mr. and Mrs. Sharon would be polite to each other in front of you and yet there'd be something wrong. And she'd have to be fair to both of them and they were always pulling at her. But we'd look at each other across the table and then it would be all right.

I don't know when it was that we knew we'd get married to each other, some time. We just started talking about it, one day, as if we always had. We were sensible, we knew it couldn't happen right off. We thought maybe when we were eighteen. That was two years but we knew we had to be educated. You don't get as good a job, if you aren't. Or that's what people say.

We weren't mushy either, like some people. We got to kissing each other good-bye, sometimes, because that's what you do when you're in love. It was cool, the way she kissed you, it was like leaves. But lots of the time we wouldn't even talk about getting married, we'd just play checkers or go over the old Latin, or once in a while go to the movies with the gang. It was really a wonderful winter. I played every game after the first one and she'd sit in the gallery and watch and I'd know she was there. You could see her little green hat or her yellow hair. Those are the class colors, green and gold.

And it's a queer thing, but everybody seemed to be pleased. That's what I can't get over. They liked to see us together. The grown people, I mean. Oh, of course, we got kidded too. And old Mrs. Withers would ask me about "my little sweetheart," in that awful damp voice of hers. But, mostly, they were all right. Even Mother was all right, though she didn't like Mrs. Sharon. I did hear her say to Father, once, "Really, George, how long is this going to last? Sometimes I feel as if I just couldn't stand it."

Then Father chuckled and said to her, "Now, Mary, last year you were worried about him because he didn't take any interest in girls at all."

"Well," she said, "he still doesn't. Oh, Helen's a nice child—no credit to

Eva Sharon—and thank heaven she doesn't giggle. Well, Charles is mature for *his* age too. But he acts so solemn about her. It isn't natural."

"Oh, let Charlie alone," said Father. "The boy's all right. He's just got a one-track mind."

But it wasn't so nice for us after the spring came.

In our part of the state, it comes pretty late, as a rule. But it was early this year. The little kids were out with scooters when usually they'd still be having snowfights and, all of a sudden, the radiators in the classrooms smelt dry. You'd got used to that smell for months—and then, there was a day when you hated it again and everybody kept asking to open the windows. The monitors had a tough time, that first week—they always do when spring starts—but this year it was worse than ever because it came when you didn't expect it.

Usually, basketball's over by the time spring really breaks, but this year it hit us while we still had three games to play. And it certainly played hell with us as a team. After Bladesburg nearly licked us, Mr. Grant called off all practice till the day before the St. Matthew's game. He knew we were stale—and they've been state champions two years. They'd have walked all over us, the way we were going.

The first thing I did was telephone Helen. Because that meant there were six extra afternoons we could have, if she could get rid of her music lessons any way. Well, she said, wasn't it wonderful, her music teacher had a cold? And that seemed just like Fate.

Well, that was a great week and we were so happy. We went to the movies five times and once Mrs. Sharon let us take her little car. She knew I didn't have a driving license but of course I've driven ever since I was thirteen and she said it was all right. She was funny—sometimes she'd be awfully kind and friendly to you and sometimes she'd be like a piece of dry ice. She was that way with Mr. Sharon too. But it was a wonderful ride. We got stuff out of the kitchen—the cook's awfully sold on Helen—and drove way out in the country. And we found an old house, with the windows gone, on top of a hill, and parked the car and took the stuff up to the house and ate it there. There weren't any chairs or tables but we pretended there were.

We pretended it was our house, after we were married. I'll never forget that. She'd even brought paper napkins and paper plates and she set two places on the floor.

"Well, Charles," she said, sitting opposite me, with her feet tucked under, "I don't suppose you remember the days we were both in school."

"Sure," I said—she was always much quicker pretending things than I was—"I remember them all right. That was before Tot Pickens got to be President." And we both laughed.

"It seems very distant in the past to me—we've been married so long," she said, as if she really believed it. She looked at me.

"Would you mind turning off the radio, dear?" she said. "This modern music always gets on my nerves."

"Have we got a radio?" I said.

"Of course, Chuck."

"With television?"

"Of course, Chuck."

"Gee, I'm glad," I said. I went and turned it off.

"Of course, if you *want* to listen to the late market reports—" she said just like Mrs. Sharon.

"Nope," I said. "The market—uh—closed firm today. Up twenty-six points."

"That's quite a long way up, isn't it?"

"Well, the country's perfectly sound at heart, in spite of this damfool Congress," I said, like Father.

She lowered her eyes a minute, just like her mother, and pushed away her plate.

"I'm not very hungry tonight," she said. "You won't mind if I go upstairs?"

"Aw, don't be like that," I said. It was too much like her mother.

"I was just seeing if I could," she said. "But I never will, Chuck."

"I'll never tell you you're nervous, either," I said. "I—oh, gosh!"

She grinned and it was all right. "Mr. Ashland and I have never had a serious dispute in our wedded lives," she said—and everybody knows who runs *that* family. "We just talk things over calmly and reach a satisfactory conclusion, usually mine."

"Say, what kind of house have we got?"

"It's a lovely house," she said. "We've got radios in every room and lots of servants. We've got a regular movie projector and a library full of good classics and there's always something in the icebox. I've got a shoe closet."

"A what?"

"A shoe closet. All my shoes are on tipped shelves, like Mother's. And all my dresses are on those padded hangers. And I say to the maid, 'Elise, Madam will wear the new French model today.'"

"What are my clothes on?" I said. "Christmas trees?"

"Well," she said. "You've got lots of clothes and dogs. You smell of pipes and the open and something called Harrisburg tweed."

"I do not," I said. "I wish I had a dog. It's a long time since Jack."

"Oh, Chuck, I'm sorry," she said.

"Oh, that's all right," I said. "He was getting old and his ear was always bothering him. But he was a good pooch. Go ahead."

"Well," she said, "of course we give parties—"

"Cut the parties," I said.

"Chuck! They're grand ones!"

"I'm a homebody," I said. "Give me—er—my wife and my little family and—say, how many kids have we got, anyway?"

She counted on her fingers. "Seven."

"Good Lord," I said.

"Well, I always wanted seven. You can make it three, if you like."

"Oh, seven's all right, I suppose," I said. "But don't they get awfully in the way?"

"No," she said. "We have governesses and tutors and send them to boarding school."

"O.K.," I said. "But it's a strain on the old man's pocketbook, just the same."

"Chuck, will you ever talk like that? Chuck, this is when we're rich." Then suddenly, she looked sad. "Oh, Chuck, do you suppose we ever will?" she said.

"Why, sure," I said.

"I wouldn't mind if it was only a dump," she said. "I could cook for you. I keep asking Hilda how she makes things."

I felt awfully funny. I felt as if I were going to cry.

"We'll do it," I said. "Don't you worry."

"Oh, Chuck, you're a comfort," she said.

I held her for a while. It was like holding something awfully precious. It wasn't mushy or that way. I know what that's like too.

"It takes so long to get old," she said. "I wish I could grow up tomorrow. I wish we both could."

"Don't you worry," I said. "It's going to be all right."

We didn't say much, going back in the car, but we were happy enough. I thought we passed Miss Eagles at the turn. That worried me a little because of the driving license. But, after all, Mrs. Sharon had said we could take the car.

We wanted to go back again, after that, but it was too far to walk and that was the only time we had the car. Mrs. Sharon was awfully nice about it but she said, thinking it over, maybe we'd better wait till I got a license. Well, Father didn't want me to get one till I was seventeen but I thought he might come around. I didn't want to do anything that would get Helen in a jam with her family. That shows how careful I was of her. Or thought I was.

All the same, we decided we'd do something to celebrate if the team won the St. Matthew's game. We thought it would be fun if we could get a steak and cook supper out somewhere—something like that. Of course we could have done it easily enough with a gang, but we didn't want a gang. We wanted to be alone together, the way we'd been at the house. That was all we wanted. I don't see what's wrong about that. We even took home the paper plates, so as not to litter things up.

Boy, that was a game! We beat them 36-34 and it took an extra period and I thought it would never end. That two-goal lead they had looked as big as the Rocky Mountains all the first half. And they gave me the full school cheer with nine Peters when we tied them up. You don't forget things like that.

Afterwards, Mr. Grant had a kind of spread for the team at his house and a lot of people came in. Kerry had driven down from State to see the game and that made me feel pretty swell. And what made me feel better yet was his taking me aside and saying, "Listen, kid, I don't want you to get the swelled head, but you did a good job. Well, just remember this. Don't let anybody kid you out of going to State. You'll like it up there." And Mr. Grant heard him and laughed and said, "Well, Peters, I'm not proselytizing. But your brother might think about some of the Eastern colleges." It was

all like the kind of dream you have when you can do anything. It was wonderful.

Only Helen wasn't there because the only girls were older girls. I'd seen her for a minute, right after the game, and she was fine, but it was only a minute. I wanted to tell her about that big St. Matthew's forward and—oh, everything. Well, you like to talk things over with your girl.

Father and Mother were swell but they had to go on to some big shindy at the country club. And Kerry was going there with Sheila Coe. But Mr. Grant said he'd run me back to the house in his car and he did. He's a great guy. He made jokes about my being the infant phenomenon of basketball, and they were good jokes too. I didn't mind them. But, all the same, when I'd said good night to him and gone into the house, I felt sort of let down.

I knew I'd be tired the next day but I didn't feel sleepy yet. I was too excited. I wanted to talk to somebody. I wandered around downstairs and wondered if Ida was still up. Well, she wasn't, but she'd left half a chocolate cake, covered over, on the kitchen table, and a note on top of it, "Congratulations to Mister Charles Peters." Well, that was awfully nice of her and I ate some. Then I turned the radio on and got the time signal—eleven—and some snappy music. But still I didn't feel like hitting the hay.

So I thought I'd call up Helen and then I thought—probably she's asleep and Hilda or Mrs. Sharon will answer the phone and be sore. And then I thought—well, anyhow, I could go over and walk around the block and look at her house. I'd get some fresh air out of it, anyway, and it would be a little like seeing her.

So I did—and it was a swell night—cool and a lot of stars—and I felt like a king, walking over. All the lower part of the Sharon house was dark but a window upstairs was lit. I knew it was her window. I went around back of the driveway and whistled once—the whistle we made up. I never expected her to hear.

But she did, and there she was at the window, smiling. She made motions that she'd come down to the side door.

Honestly, it took my breath away when I saw her. She had on a kind of yellow thing over her night clothes and she looked so pretty. Her feet were so pretty in those slippers. You almost expected her to be carrying one of those animals kids like—she looked young enough. I know I oughtn't to have gone into the house. But we didn't think anything about it—we were just glad to see each other. We hadn't had any sort of chance to talk over the game.

We sat in front of the fire in the living room and she went out to the kitchen and got us cookies and milk. I wasn't really hungry, but it was like that time at the house, eating with her. Mr. and Mrs. Sharon were at the country club, too, so we weren't disturbing them or anything. We turned off the lights because there was plenty of light from the fire and Mr. Sharon's one of those people who can't stand having extra lights burning. Dad's that way about saving string.

It was quiet and lovely and the firelight made shadows on the ceiling. We talked a lot and then we just sat, each of us knowing the other was there.

And the room got quieter and quieter and I'd told her about the game and I didn't feel excited or jumpy any more—just rested and happy. And then I knew by her breathing that she was asleep and I put my arm around her for just a minute. Because it was wonderful to hear that quiet breathing and know it was hers. I was going to wake her in a minute. I didn't realize how tired I was myself.

And then we were back in that house in the country and it was our home and we ought to have been happy. But something was wrong because there still wasn't any glass in the windows and a wind kept blowing through them and we tried to shut the doors but they wouldn't shut. It drove Helen distracted and we were both running through the house, trying to shut the doors, and we were cold and afraid. Then the sun rose outside the windows, burning and yellow and so big it covered the sky. And with the sun was a horrible, weeping voice. It was Mrs. Sharon's saying, "Oh, my God, oh, my God."

I didn't know what had happened, for a minute, when I woke. And then I did and it was awful. Mrs. Sharon was saying, "Oh, Helen—I trusted you . . ." and looking as if she were going to faint. And Mr. Sharon looked at her for a minute and his face was horrible and he said, "Bred in the bone," and she looked as if he'd hit her. Then he said to Helen—

I don't want to think of what they said. I don't want to think of any of the things they said. Mr. Sharon is a bad man. And she is a bad woman, even if she is Helen's mother. All the same, I could stand the things he said better than hers.

I don't want to think of any of it. And it is all spoiled now. Everything is spoiled. Miss Eagles saw us going to that house in the country and she said horrible things. They made Helen sick and she hasn't been back at school. There isn't any way I can see her. And if I could, it would be spoiled. We'd be thinking about the things they said.

I don't know how many of the people know, at school. But Tot Pickens passed me a note. And, that afternoon, I caught him behind his house. I'd have broken his nose if they hadn't pulled me off. I meant to. Mother cried when she heard about it and Dad took me into his room and talked to me. He said you can't lick the whole town. But I will anybody like Tot Pickens. Dad and Mother have been all right. But they say things about Helen and that's almost worse. They're for me because I'm their son. But they don't understand.

I thought I could talk to Kerry but I can't. He was nice but he looked at me such a funny way. I don't know—sort of impressed. It wasn't the way I wanted him to look. But he's been decent. He comes down almost every weekend and we play catch in the yard.

You see, I just go to school and back now. They want me to go with the gang, the way I did, but I can't do that. Not after Tot. Of course my marks are a lot better because I've got more time to study now. But it's lucky I haven't got Miss Eagles though Dad made her apologize. I couldn't recite to her.

I think Mr. Grant knows because he asked me to his house once and we had a conversation. Not about that, though I was terribly afraid he would. He showed me a lot of his old college things and the gold football he wears on his watch chain. He's got a lot of interesting things.

Then we got talking, somehow, about history and things like that and how times had changed. Why, there were kings and queens who got married younger than Helen and me. Only now we lived longer and had a lot more to learn. So it couldn't happen now. "It's civilization," he said. "And all civilization's against nature. But I suppose we've got to have it. Only sometimes it isn't easy." Well somehow or other, that made me feel less lonely. Before that I'd been feeling that I was the only person on earth who'd ever felt that way.

I'm going to Colorado, this summer, to a ranch, and next year, I'll go East to school. Mr. Grant says he thinks I can make the basketball team, if I work hard enough, though it isn't as big a game in the East as it is with us. Well, I'd like to show them something. It would be some satisfaction. He says not to be too fresh at first, but I won't be that.

It's a boy's school and there aren't even women teachers. And, maybe, afterwards, I could be a professional basketball player or something, where you don't have to see women at all. Kerry says I'll get over that; but I won't. They all sound like Mrs. Sharon to me now, when they laugh.

They're going to send Helen to a convent—I found out that. Maybe they'll let me see her before she goes. But, if we do, it will be all wrong and in front of people and everybody pretending. I sort of wish they don't—though I want to, terribly. When her mother took her upstairs that night—she wasn't the same Helen. She looked at me as if she was afraid of me. And no matter what they do for us now, they can't fix that.

WILBUR DANIEL STEELE *Since 1919 Wilbur Daniel Steele (b. 1886) has been recognized as one of the most skillful craftsmen among American writers of the short story. His list of awards and prizes is unusually long and impressive. Some of his collections of stories are Land's End (1918), Shame Dance (1923), The Man Who Saw Through Heaven (1927), and Tower of Sand (1929).*

THE BODY OF THE CRIME

THE HOUSE in which Daniel was born was the kind of which we say, as we drive past it in the elm-pillared margin of some New England village: "What a monstrosity!" One day, when the Antique has caught up with the Eighties, perhaps we shall say: "What a beauty! What noble

"The Body of the Crime." Reprinted by permission of Harold Matson.

bays and airy cupolas and richness of brown scroll-work! They knew how to build their houses in those days."

Perhaps, too, we shall have matured enough to say of men like Dan Kinsman, who was Daniel's father: "They knew how to build their lives."

When the young Daniel came home from his first year away to Prep school and saw with his changed eyes the unchanging house, the weighing cornices and flying towers, squared bays, rounded bays, porte-cochère, all cocoa brown in the shadows of the chestnuts—"That's it," he thought, "it's not like other fellows' houses."

And when he studied this man, his father, it seemed for a while he had found the answer to the riddle as old in its secret wretchedness as the very beginnings of his memory. "And *he*, he's not like other fellows' fathers."

Other fellows' fathers, Daniel had found in his year, were men who arrived cheerfully from lifting their incomes and departed grimly to lower their medal scores. Forward-moving, tomorrow-thinking young elders, eager, industrious, mobile fellows fearful of nothing but of seeming to stand still.

But here was a father apparently content to be one year where he had been the year before, possessed of but the same possessions, the same small-town friendships, the same leisurely, half-patriarchal judgeship, the same pedestrian pleasures, books and dogs, pruning-hooks and garden hoes and fishing rods. And he a strong, straight man alive, not yet fifty, with black hair thick on his head, and lungs to laugh with when he wanted. Strange!

Now it came to Daniel it must be because his father was so wanting in—that's to say, so strange this way—that he had always seemed to his son so—so—Daniel groped for a word for a thing he'd never been able to give a shape or name, and had to finish lamely—seemed so "strange."

Daniel could have laughed for joy to discover, now he was grown up, that the trouble about his father was so little a one as this. For all the weight of his fifteen years, he could have skipped for lightness, to know that here was a difference from other fathers he now could grasp, even learn to condone, yes, even admire, even fight for, with fellows with more—well—say—money-grabbing dads.

Yes, Daniel could have skipped for lightness on the deep cave-green turf of the hydrangea alley, where they walked and talked that first June afternoon at home, he and his father, while mother watched them with her pale smile from her long chair in her high window.

It was curious; Daniel had always loved his ailing, beautiful mother, easily, and been near her and told her everything tellable, easily, and not thought much about it. The one he would have given his life to be able to love as easily, to be close to, friends with, whole of heart, was this other, this darkly handsome man whom he himself was so absurdly like to look at, his father.

So today it was as if the year of forgetting had worked a good miracle. It was a dream come true to find himself sauntering and chatting with Dan Kinsman as affectionately at ease as though they had been but two fellows, gravely estimating the apple yield in the west yard and the hay chances in the

back mowing, chuckling together over the antics of Spot's pups on the barn floor, waving answer to the view halloo of Doc Martin racketing by in the antique twin-six, and, wonder of wonders at last, arm in arm, man and man, marching indoors prepared to mount and demand of mother if supper were ever to be ready—as if she, poor fragile chatelaine, could know anything about that.

But, day of marvels! An elixir must have run in the air. For here in their sight came mother down the stairs to meet them, walking by herself, suddenly, subtly revived, the flush on her cheeks and the shine in her eyes not more for their astonishment than for her own.

So tonight there were three at table in place of two, and it was like the sort of dream in which one wakes from an interior nightmare to find everything finished that was horrid, and everything at its beginning that is right and bright. Nor did it end with the supper table; afterward she would go out abroad with them, as if greedy to share in the marvel of those two men of hers who walked of a sudden as one, and by their walking so, seemed so suddenly to have made her walk again.

What a sight it was for the evening sun to see, level and bloody rose beneath the eaves of the chestnuts! Dan Kinsman, bemused, commencing words and swallowing their ends on half-choked chuckles, even as his eyes, quick for once, kept slant track of Vivian's every oddly exuberant gesture. Daniel, beatified, accepting wonders with a new omnivorous trust. And Vivian Kinsman, unbelievable, a princess freed from some evil enchantment in exile, returned to her kingdom, leading them.

In the east yard, hidden for years, the low, excited laugh was on her lips continuously. For this border, it was: "They're too gorgeous, Dan; I love them!" For that bed: "But there never *were* such flowers!" When she came in view of father's season's pride, the bastion of man-high crimson poppies, all she could do was put her hands to her heart.

Only when she caught sight of Spot and her puppies, taking the last of the sun at the barn door, was there a shadow of change in the exclamation of discovery.

"You're going to keep them all, Dan!" She drew father's eyes. "All, Dan!"

He would have temporized, laughingly: "Spot got away this time, and—"

"You're not going to drown them, Dan. I couldn't bear to think—"

The sharpness in her voice brought quickness to his.

"Why, no, of course not, Vivian. I shall keep them, of course—unless someone should want them very much—who'd give them a good home."

The sun touched distant woods. Father dared worry aloud at last.

"It'll be chilly in another second now, Vivian."

She turned back with a queer, mercurial docility, asking only, when they came to the porch steps, that she might have some of the crimson poppies for her room tonight.

"I should so love to see them in the morning, Dan, just three or four."

"You'll have an armful, that's what you'll have, dear; I'll go and get them now."

Daniel took her in on his arm, feeling tall, now his father was gone. She would go only as far as the living room for the moment, where a slender summer fire was laid, ready for the match. When Daniel had lighted it he studied the white figure lying back deep in Dan Kinsman's chair. He said: "You're happy tonight, mother."

She needn't answer. Her eyes, fixed on the fire, were alight with all its beginning, playing flames. And before he knew why, "Have you always been happy here with father," he demanded, "and with me?"

This must have seemed to need no answer, at first. But then she sat up and fixed the boy with her straight gaze. "Always, yes!" From vehemence it changed to mirth. "Whatever put it in your head, sonny—yes, yes, yes!" And sinking back, with a little gasp at the end of her laughter: "He's an angel, sonny, your father is, but he's an awful slow-poke; won't you go and hurry him along?"

Father had meant it when he said an armful; he had gathered a whole great sheaf of the poppies, and rather a pity, for the blooms were closed. But what matter, if Vivian wanted them; they'd open again at day. So he seemed to be thinking as he stood there, laden and bemused, in the falling night.

And so it was that Daniel, his son, came upon him, deep in a preoccupation of his own, halted a rod away, and, without lifting his gaze from the ground, said: "Has mother liked it here in Kennelbridge, father?"

Dan Kinsman had had a day of astonishments. Without turning anything but his head, and that slowly, he studied his dim questioner.

"It has liked your mother here," he said quietly.

The boy, given a riddle, raised his eyes to the man, who was no more than a shadow-shape in the dusk now—and, as shadows may be, something distorted and magnified—between the blackening blood of the poppies he carried and the dyke he had torn them from. And Daniel forgot his riddle and widened his eyes. The father knew the sign of old. All afternoon he had been waiting for it, pulled between dread and the beginnings of an incredible hope. Now he wheeled, cried, "Ah, Daniel, son!" and held out his arms, careless of their sanguinary burden. And his son turned and ran.

What good is it to be fifteen and a man, instead of ten and a boy, or five and a child? When Daniel, fleeing, needles in his legs and an icicle up his backbone, reached the firelight where he had left his mother sitting, it was on the knees of veriest childhood he tumbled down, to hide his face in the chair-bottom beside her, wind his fingers in her skirts, and sob it out in words aloud, at last.

"Mother—why am I—why am I sometimes—sometimes so fr-fr-frightened of my—my fa-fa-father?"

Mother had always answered his questions, till he asked this question. Her failure now, her complete, unstirring silence, doubled the magnitude of a terror till now his own shamed secret. And the doubled was redoubled by the sound of that man's feet on the piazza, coming toward the door.

He groveled. "Mother, please, hurry—hurry and tell me, tell me, mother!

What—what's there about my father—what's he done that's such a—a horror?"

Still, for answer, no word, no gesture. And it was too late; a quiet door had opened and the feet were in the room. As Daniel scrambled up and wheeled, a defending courage suffused him. He stood his ground, and, not knowing why, spread his arms across the man's way, and, not knowing what, cried: "No! Don't! Don't come!"

Through the water in his eyes he began to see his father's face hung there before him, oddly gray, the stare of it fixed, not on him, but on her behind him. And he grew aware of two things fighting in that stare, the greater one like a stunned sorrow, the lesser like a reawakening hope.

As sometimes in crisis, it was of the lesser one the man spoke now.

"This, then, Daniel, is why you said what you said out there, and sobbed, and ran away back here? It wasn't that old queerness of yours coming back then, after all?"

The husband's shock was gentler than the son's, for all evening he had had in his mind as he watched Vivian the thought of a candle when it gutters, how it will flame to its old brightness for an instant at the last.

Not so with Daniel. When he turned and knew that the reason his mother had sat there and not answered him was that all the while she had sat there in the deep chair dead, he fainted.

Doc Martin had to mop his bald head with a troubled handkerchief many times in the following days. On the third, the afternoon after the funeral, stopping in at the Kinsmans' by right of the oldest and closest friend and finding Dan there all alone, he asked: "Where's Daniel hiding himself?" And if it sounded casual, and was meant to, already in the soil of the doctor's mind uneasy little roots of wonder had begun to set.

"Don't know; not far off, I guess." The answer was given with an averted face.

Why shouldn't it be? Men's faces, when they've just buried their wives of twenty years—why may they not wish to keep what's written on them to themselves? The physician mocked himself for a worrying idiot as he went on home.

But he had his head to mop again when he got to his own house, and found Daniel fidgeting up and down the piazza, inarticulate and miserably mantling. It was all mysterious and awkward. He didn't know what he was to do or say, and especially was this so when the boy's dumbness, laboring, brought forth some mouse of words about the weather or the baseball standings. But finally, "Doctor Martin," it came at a rush, "was my mother happy, living here in Kennelbridge, with father—and me?"

It is unfortunate that at such moments men seem to think they have to speak in the manner of oracles. As Dan Kinsman, three days before, now Doc Martin:

"Well, son, she *lived* here in Kennelbridge, with you and your father, almost exactly ten years longer than I gave her to live. Does that mean anything?"

And thereafter he wondered why the boy's eyes, savagely troubled, followed him slantwise everywhere. He wondered more. Seeing the sun go and the dusk come, he wondered why the sensitive, naturally unobtrusive lad stayed on, apparently aimless and plainly wretched, and stayed, and made no move to go. It was after dark when Doc Martin appeared at the Kinsman place, to find Dan out in the east yard, standing, chin down, hands locked behind him.

"I thought, Dan, you might wonder where the kid was. He's over at my house. I'm afraid I've been—uh—keeping him."

Dan listened, stock-still, without comment. It became an ordeal.

"I don't know just how to say it, Dan. The boy seems badly upset. He has a lot of his mother in him, Dan—a lot of the thing that made us all love her—and—want to spank her, sometimes. That sentimental defenselessness—it went with her ailment, I've no doubt. That making a mountain of emotion out of a molehill of—not that I mean this is a molehill—but—damn it, old man! The boy—this house—this night after the funeral—I've a hunch he'd more than half like to stay over with me. Thought I'd ask you."

"Yes."

The one syllable, it sounded rough in the throat. As he went away the doctor turned twice to study the figure posted there in darkness, head heavy, face hidden. Anger? Sorrow? What? Headless, tailless business! He told himself he wished he were dead and well out of it.

He wasn't. After that night, any half-plans there may have been of father and son going off for a summer of travel together were dropped. There was a camp in the Green Mountains where Daniel's school went, and he was packed for it by the second morning. Dan came to Doc Martin, unhappy, unused to lying.

"I wonder if you'll do something for me, old man? Drive Daniel over to the main line this noon. I shall be busy."

The doctor did it. What their parting was he never knew, for the boy had his bags out at the gate when he drove by, and the father was "busy." If the friend of them both was profanely troubled he kept it quiet, and set himself for a gallant hour of cheer and small talk. The problem of a book for the journey seemed a godsend. They went over the news stand's library with a mutual pretense of care, but as if it were not bad enough that all the novels were detective novels, Daniel discovered after brief browsings that there was none he could be certain he hadn't read. As he accepted one at last, entitled *Murder!*, the physician had to stare.

"Lord, son! To look at you, anybody'd think you were as mild as a lamb. And here you turn out a glutton for crime. Don't you ever read anything else?"

Daniel went red—even redder, the doctor thought, than was asked for.

"Oh, I forget 'em faster'n I read 'em. If you asked me one single thing that had happened, a week after, I couldn't any more remember it than I could—"

He got no further. He had touched by chance on a pet dogma of the other's; and Doc Martin, figuratively, squared off.

"Couldn't remember? Bosh! Ever tried?"

"Tried?" Daniel was confused by this vehemence.

"*Really* tried, I mean. Rolled up your mental sleeves and taken pick and spade to the humus of memory, to try and turn up some one particular thing that's buried there? It's surprising. There are authenticated records of long-term prisoners, men in solitary confinement, who, simply for something for their minds to do—"

And here they came, the classic cases, served up with a zealot's gusto; the aged criminals reconstructing verbatim the nursery tales of infancy; the old fellows repainting in minutest detail places passed through as children and thereafter wholly forgotten. And so forth. And so on.

The man with a hobby is not to be held accountable. Doc Martin, who had toiled to make talk—now his one fear was that the belated train would make up time.

"Can't remember! Actually, you can't *forget*! Nothing you've ever felt, heard, seen, no matter how tiny—you may mislay the record, but you can't lose it. No matter how dim, it's here in your cranium somewhere, indelible, forever."

The bent ear and big eye of his audience it was cruel to give up. The train wags in, but there was still the moment on the platform.

"Theoretically, Daniel, you ought to be able to remember the day of your birth. But it would probably take you as many as a thousand years, in a dark cell, and after all—"

After all, after the boy was up the step Doc Martin recollected something he had been two days thinking on.

"Daniel, listen! Your mother *was* happy. Her life here was a clear, quiet, happy life, with those she loved deeply. Believe me, Daniel."

It was good for Daniel he had the book called *Murder*! At the end of his emotional tether he must have escape, and the surest escape was here between these covers; he knew the taste of it beforehand, as the eater of drugs knows the taste of his drug. Escape, yes. And a curious, helpless, rather horrid surrender.

Half a year ago he would not have been ashamed to have the doctor remark it; it was only of late he had begun to have misgivings of this craving for the dark excitement that surrounds the body of a crime, a craving he could never remember not to have had strong in him.

Never remember? "Bosh!" For a little while yet he left the book unopened, and thought of the mild old doctor and his ferocious expletive. But was it true, even a half of what he had claimed, about digging up buried things? . . . If you tried hard enough? . . . Took a pick and spade . . . to buried things? . . .

There were five hours to ride, more than enough for the book. Let it wait.

To remember things forgotten! By dim footprints in the mold of old fantasies, by broken twigs of sensation—this sort of sound disliked for no

reason, that odor as inexplicably agreeable—by clues so thinner-than-air to be able to track back relentlessly—what?

“Bosh!” It was Daniel’s own bosh this time. But the light in the deeps of his abstracted eyes burned no less steadily, nor did the color of a strange excitation retreat from his cheeks and temples.

There was a station. Express, the train only slowed, going through. On the flickering platform stood an elderly woman, back to, a stoutish figure glimpsed for a split second, gray-clad, with a purple hat with a tulle quill.

“Emma!”

But then the boy lay back and derided himself. It was that purple, forward-tilted hat. Emma, his old nurse, had been dead three—no, two years. It was three years ago she came to see him, from Albany, and that was the year before she died.

Yes, yes. She came in her nephew’s car, and brought Daniel a sweater she had knitted for him. He could see her now, when he tried to get into it, there on the big circular side piazza, and her chagrin. “Mercy, when I was here last I never looked to see you grow so in two years. Remember when I was here last time, Dannie?”

“Course I do; what d’you think? And you said I used to be a caution when I was little, and you hoped I’d got over it.”

“Bless you, Dannie, and have you?”

Had he? Got over what? Three years ago he’d known what, because three years ago he’d remembered what she’d said two years before that. Something about: “I declare, you always were a caution, Dannie. The first day ever I saw you . . . saw you . . . first day ever I saw you—”

Concentrate on it! Try harder!

“—first day ever I saw you, do you know what you said . . . what you—”

In the Pullman, but unconscious of the Pullman, Daniel knotted his brows.

Don’t give up. Go at it some other way. . . .

Well, they’d been in his room; he was ready for bed, and Emma had come up—she’d stayed overnight that next-to-last visit—and she’d sat there in the blue rocker and talked and talked. Talked so long that mother had called: “Daniel, Emma’s tired, so you must stop asking her so many—”

But now he *had* it—the other thing—it was “question.”

It wasn’t “what you said.” It was, complete: “First day ever I saw you, do you know *the question you asked me*? Well, most three-year-olds, they’ll ask you like, ‘What’s a zebra?’ or ‘What’s a airplane?’ But the first thing you asked me was . . . thing you asked me was—”

No, after all, not quite complete. Why did the light of recollection close again, just there? Especially when, by thinking on it, that bedtime visit of Emma’s had grown as vivid as a thing today.

The expression of the boy in seat No. 5 was a set scowl. A flush colored it, like anger. A “Bosh!” trembled on his lips. He had a book to read, and, by hang, he’d read it now. A book called Murder!

“Murder!”

Why, now he’d got that too!

"The first thing you asked me—I was trying to get you to go into the summerhouse and you were howling and pulling—and you asked me, 'What is murder?' And if you don't call that funny for a three-year-old to be asking—"

Murder? Three-year-old? Funny? . . . But leave those, for the moment.

Summerhouse! What summerhouse? So far back as Daniel, by knotting his brows to their tightest, could recollect, there'd never been at home any such thing as a summerhouse.

Summerhouse? Latticework, probably. Light through it in squares or diamonds, probably. Unless—ugh, it was chilly in the Pullman—there were vines. Vines?

The train carried the corporeal weight of Daniel Kinsman to White River Junction that summer afternoon. But the part of him that weighed nothing at all had started on an immensely longer journey, an incalculably stranger quest.

At camp, for the first while, they let him go his own gait, without nagging him or themselves. Aware of his shocking loss, they even let down the rules a little—rules, fundamentally, of good fellowship—in his case. Daniel, with his shut mouth, little appetite, and eyes fixed habitually on nothing, was no good fellow for anyone.

This was all right for a certain period. But when a week and another week had gone, and a normal youngster should have been getting some hold on healthy life, and Daniel was still not less separate, but if anything more so, physically torpid, colorless of expression, unmistakably if incomprehensibly not among those present, the responsible began to think of doing something about it.

At length the Head sat down and wrote a letter to the boy's father, who had shut up house on Doc Martin's plea and gone off with him to the Canadian woods. But that letter was destined not to be posted. Before a stamp was on it, word came in that young Kinsman had not been seen since lights-out the night before. At the end of a day and night of combing the woods, beating the hills, a telegram was dispatched to Canada.

Locked, bolted and shuttered though the house was, Daniel knew a boy's way into it. One of the cellar windows was loose enough to let a lock-pick wire in.

Of all that Daniel had done, of all he was yet to undertake, this one act was the hardest. That he could, in the night, enter into that sealed, empty, pitch-black habitation, of which anyone might be nervous—and he, with his mother dead and his imagination whipped keen by a fortnight's flagellation, was horribly, icily afraid—gives the measure of the thing that was stronger than the house's terror, its pull.

If he were only in the house, only on the scene there, only at home! Day by day, night by night, the brown house of home kept the drag-line taut on him, by innuendo, by promise, by command. Whenever a peephole, opened in memory, had closed again before the glimpsed stage could set itself with half the properties of old actuality—"Ah, yes, but if you were *there* it might."

And now that he was here? Now that he was actually in, his feet weighing on sightless stairs, hands guiding him along blind walls? Now what was he to do?

Nothing. When he had reached his own room, at the end of gropings that brought sweat out of his neck, he pawed for his bed, found it, and laid himself down along the middle of the mattress. There, inert—almost as inert for hours at a time as a cataleptic—he remained. How long?

By calendar it came to four days. In his consciousness the lapse of time was not measurable, it was as well a dream's forty winks as a dungeon's forty years.

Of his rare actual moves he was to all intents unconscious. Luckily it was summer, and the water not turned off; from time to time he drank. Once he bolted raw oatmeal from a box in the pantry and was ill with it. The electric current was cut, but there was the oil lantern he might have lighted long before he did, had he cared. Rather, perhaps, had he dared. Perhaps, more simply, had he felt the need. After all, his eyes were no longer concerned with this shuttered Here and Now.

They were concerned with the half-open door of a summerhouse.

Relatively, it may have been little more than a scratching of the topsoil; actually, in that blank-eyed fortnight away at camp, he had penetrated a surprising depth into the leaf mold of his fallen memories. Most important, he had caught the trick of it, learned the heft and balance of his tools, pick and spade, a dogged mental concentration working at one with a reserveless mental surrender.

So it had become child's play, literally, by fastening on some fag-end of sensuous recollection—a barked shin of escapade, sting of a punishment, taste of the sweetmeat of some reward—to restore the outlines of whole episodes in the comparatively recent years of his sixes, fives, even his fours; to relive whole days, repeople whole scenes with shapes which began by having no names, or with names wanting shapes, and watch these phantasmal beings take on identities and lineaments—and lo! Auntie Prichard, of course, the doughnut woman! Or Mary Belle—who could forget the girl with wire on her teeth?

He had learned a lot about the creature of pranks and bush-beatings that is the mind. He learned, at a price, that no lead can be too paltry to follow. So it was, retrieving a boy's face plastered with freckles and banged with red hair, he had given three hours of his last camp morning to trying to find the face a name. A dozen times he nearly had it; the muscles of his tongue knew the feel of it, yet couldn't get the sound. It made him mad. "I won't give it up, not if it takes all day!"

And, "day," there it was. Georgie Day! Who could forget Georgie Day?

Accident? In the weird business Daniel was about, there's no such thing.

Georgie Day. Well, well! Immediately, fruitless hours fruited magically. A house suddenly sprang up around the freckled rascal, and around the house a tin-can-littered yard, and in the yard a tumbling barn, and in the barn, rabbits.

Rabbits? What about rabbits? Look! here's a rabbit running, bounding

high with fright across a greensward in sunshine. No, none of Georgie's; he and his have vanished from the scene. This is a wild one, cottontail, surprised among berry bushes behind the home garden, retreat cut off, scuttling across the west lawn for all its worth, and Daniel after it.

Run, cottontail! Run, boy! Bounce, bunny! Whoop, Dannie!

"Here, Daisy! Where are you, Daisy? where's that dog?"

Daisy? Why, Spot's mother, of course, elderly, sleepy, all setter-red.

Yellow sunshine, green grass, little wild blue shadow, hunting, praying, for some hole. And a hole, a hole at last! Squarish aperture among massed leaves. Dive for it, bunny! Stop, boy! Into it, rabbit! Boy, stop dead! Don't go near there, youngster! Frown if you please, stamp, mutter; yes, you know you don't want to go near there. You know you don't.

Why not?

Pandemonium. Out comes rabbit, out comes Daisy, the lazy, surprised asleep in there. And the two of them, fleeing, pursuing, flicker past the transfixed Dannie, and away, into limbo. For it's the squarish aperture in massed woodbine leaves, cross-hatch of lattice in their gaps, lattice door ajar—it's this he's staring at.

So it was, by uttering the irrelevant words "if it takes all day," Daniel had found the way back to the summerhouse.

Two weeks it had taken him to reach its viny exterior. Had he had a hundred years, real ones, in place of the hundred hours he could command, who knows but that he might actually have succeeded in covering the rest of the journey—might have crept or leaped at last across that one remaining rod of grass, gravel and door-sill, and been inside?

He started sanguinely. Only a rod left—the last dash—home stretch. Pooh! Thrown back from it, confused, he started again with the same assurance, only again to be set on his heels by a wall, impalpable as air, but impenetrable as glass. How many times did he relaunch the attack? In one hour of the clock he could live a score in recollection, a hundred, toward the end, when hunger and fever had whipped the pace. No longer sanguinely, but desperately, he tried one breach after another.

For now there were several; he had multiplied his points of attack. To the rabbit day he had added quickly the Emma day. It was no task by now to reconstruct that episode entire. He could commence with the breakfast table, where the new nurse was first introduced into the scheme of his cosmos. He could mount then to his room with her, suffer the change into denim play-pants, come down, come out, and go toying around the yard at her arm's end, dazzled by the sudden wealth of her "What shall we play? Anything on earth you like, Dannie?"

So, not once, but dozens of times, he came to the spot where something in him balked, he began to howl, cleared Emma's grasp, let her go on. He could see her face in all its mystification now—and see it, more was the wonder, across the width of the rod he couldn't cross—in the doorway of the summerhouse. And he could hear her expostulating still:

"What is it, Dannie? Nothing but a toad here. You're not afraid of a toad!"

And he could feel something in his stomach's pit, that came up, and was words.

"What is murder, Emma?"

Why on earth that? What was it in him, cold and hot—not shame, not rage, not terror, alone, but like a misery of all three compounded? Or like the feeling Daniel had to this day, immensely diluted, whenever anyone in his hearing spoke of cycles or sickles or Seckels.

And, coming to that, why on earth that? Did it all come from "Seckel"? And did that come from the pear tree, down past the east corner of the barn, which, since he was recollecting, he recollected he had never liked? Recollected, in fact, that when they used to play hide-and-seek at his house, and Daniel himself was it, and one of the boys hid behind that Seckel pear below the barn, he wouldn't go there to spy him, not if he stayed it forever.

So? Why wouldn't he? Time and time again he made an effort to follow that trace, but it was of no use; there was nothing there that was important, he had to tell himself; much better buckle down to business with the shovel day.

The shovel day he had added to the rabbit day and the Emma day now. Where it came in the chronology he couldn't say; though he judged from the longer time it had taken him to dig it out it must have been earlier. At any rate, it was the farthest back he could remember being frightened by his father.

He had to work on it. Again, again, stubbornly again, he would stand in a flushed twilight on the perimeter of that arc whose radius was a rod, and watch the woodbine leaves put aside, and see his father emerge from the dark interior, carrying a spade.

Well, what about it? What so fearful was his father doing? Going gardening, probably, in the evening's cool; tools may have been kept in the summerhouse. So, what? Look more deeply into this! But try as Daniel would, he couldn't. Each time, at sight of man and shovel, the child gulped, turned, ran, with goblins grabbing after him, for the house and mother.

Why? Why, oh, why, oh, why?

And now at last, time lost all count of—grown to months and years, it seemed, in the black house—now at last, let down by the caving of the body beneath it, Daniel's mind began to surrender to exhaustion. Daylight—what was actually the fourth daylight—creeping through the shutter cracks in slim fans of grayness, did not waken him for a long time from the sleep into which he had sunk near midnight.

When it did he failed to fall immediately, as his habit was, into his reminiscent reverie. Lying supine, staring at the ceiling, it was the ceiling he saw this morning. He raised himself on the mattress, intending to go downstairs, but with the act a dizziness took hold of him. He lay back again and listened to his teeth knocking together. It is one thing for a man, adult and idle, to starve himself for a while; for a growing boy it is another thing.

It was the first time there had been room in Daniel's brain for a thought of failure. Was it not possible that the end of the time he could hide and have solitude was approaching? No sooner the idea, than he repelled it. With a strength of panic he drove himself back to his task. Dig or die, now!

But the pick and spade, till now so docile, developed the balkings and crotchets of a curious sabotage. Today, when he summoned the old face of a playmate, straightway the features began to twist in the weirdest fashion, magnify, diminish, like the grotesque faces that dissolve in dreams. Or, coming on a new trail of old adventure unexplored, he found it leading him into extraordinary places, out of all color with the rest of his past—and realized with a start that it was something he had read, not lived.

And presently, frustrated, he slept again.

Each other day had been an age; this was but a dozen blinks long, a day wasted. How could Daniel know the incalculable value of that day his mind lay fallow?

It was night once more when he arose, went into his mother's room, and lay down on the bed there. It was nearly, if not quite, somnambulism. Certainly he was unaware of any reason for the move. Whether he fell asleep and woke up, whether he slept at all, or waked at all, whether at any time he was actually, bodily, in the summerhouse, it would be now impossible to say. It can only be said that the thing till the end had all the stigmata of true nightmare.

The will to terror, to begin with. Terror sprung of its own seed, an effect wanting a cause, a shadow condemned to create the object that casts it. And with this, alternately, a weightless, boundless mobility, and a sense of being held from moving, arms pinioned, legs bound.

Nothing was very clear. Such moments as were lighted—less than pictures; mere rags of sight vignetted on the dark—were whisked away too quickly to be comprehended whole. Nor were these many. The pervading scene was a blackness in which blacknesses moved, giving forth but muffled sounds. Acts witnessed and no more, shadowy, separate, retreating rather than ever coming nearer.

"They're going away from the summerhouse, ma'am," or, "carrying him away"—that adverb, "away," was forever recurring. And generally somewhere near it, whether before or after, blacknesses moved on blackness with a black burden; heavy breathing, soft feet.

It must be understood there was never an attempt at sequence. No act revealed itself whole at any one time; at divers times divers fractions of it would repeat themselves, mingled with stray fractions of other acts or utterances.

Take the one set of sounds. Sometimes it ran, out there—door-creak, oath, blow, scuffle. Sometimes quite reversed. Sometimes—oath, blow, scuffle, door-creak.

And that querying cry, coming from close above, thrown down—out of a window?—into the dark, now it would be, "Dan, what are you doing? *Tom!*" Then, like as not, next time it would be: "Tom, what are you doing? *Dan!*"

It is impossible to tell it, by a tenth, adequately. For by the very mechanics

of telling, nine-tenths of the formlessness is lost; fragments, released from the peculiar bedevilment of nightmare, inevitably fly together. Detached words, fractional phrases, flickering by, flitting back again; before they can be written here they must needs have formed themselves by some degree into sentences, no matter if the sentences are forever changing something of the forms. As, for instance, in the one, "Dan (Tom), what are you doing?" followed by, "*Tom! (Dan!)*"

There's the other sentence, into which at last the word "murder" has come. By the time it has crystallized itself into the sequence, "It was murder, Dan; I saw it; murder in cold blood!"—by that time the light around it has crystallized, too, in a pattern, a pattern of diamond-shaped pencils striking in through gaps of latticework. And the strait-jacket of nightmare around one's limbs has taken the shape of the arms of the crier-out. And the crier-out is mother.

"Don't come in that door; I'm afraid of you, Dan! The blood on your hands is blood of brutal murder. Why? Don't tell me. Was it because I loved him? I love my child, here in my arms. Must I be afraid for *him* then? Must he be afraid of his father now, as long as the two of you live?"

And this cry, too, vibrant with hysteria, has a vision to go with it, a peephole vision of a close lantern, a red-flecked hand, a spade with earth-spots on it, and the tight, white, terrible mask of father's face.

So, in the telling, already this big, close lantern light has extricated itself from the little lantern light at distance. But in the dream, if it was a dream, this very separation of the two became from the first the thing, intuitively, the dreamer fought for. Wrestled for with tied hands; ran after with hobbled feet; cried to with stopped mouth.

In the beginning it was equally the one or the other that might start it; toward the end of an aeon a kind of rule was established; it was the little light far off that began, and the big one then, too soon, that came and swallowed it, only to be swallowed in its turn by that blackness with black things moving in it, or the door-creak sequence, containing the scuffle, the oath and the blow.

Perhaps it was because of this that the desire of the boy's dread centered more and more fiercely on that weakling spark, and he told himself it was there that whatever was hidden was hidden, and awaited its recurrence impatient of the other shadow-plays. And when it came, and the voice of the second woman in the bedroom—a nurse?—began, "It's digging they are, ma'am, down there—" and with that the light began to swell, irresistibly, and stripe itself in the pattern that meant the summerhouse, Daniel fought with all his bitter, puny power against the reënwrapping arms, the relifting hysteria of mother's "Don't come in that door; I'm afraid of you!" and the reopening peepshow of the red hand and the white face.

And he cried: "Yes, but go on with the other! Digging down *where*, down *where*?" till in the nightmare the lees of the sweat of his exhaustion ran in icy dribbles down his skin.

It was not till he gave up, beaten by weariness, that it suddenly gave in.

"It's digging they are, ma'am, down there under—"

"Under *what*?"

"—under that pear tree—"

"Pear tree?"

"—with the little pears, below the barn. By the light of the lantern, ma'am—"

Lantern! By the way, where is a lantern? Now, quick!

"—they're digging in the—"

Digging! Pick and spade? Where are they?

"—ground, burying something—"

A thing that is buried!

"—under the pear tree, ma'am."

Ever tried? Rolled up your sleeves, taken pick and spade—to turn up something that is buried there?

When Dan Kinsman and Doc Martin reached the house late that night, and found it black, the one last hope, which neither had dared confess to, seemed to have followed all its fellows. Red lidded with sleeplessness, jaws ill shaven, clothing long worn, they looked the men they felt now, as, unlocking the front door, they went in.

"What's the good?"

It was the doctor that saw it, through one of the living-room windows.

"Hey! What's up out there? Somebody with a lantern, down there behind the barn."

They started out of the door at a walk, but then ran.

They found a lantern, a spade and a garden mattock under the Seckel-pear tree, and a sprawling trench dug, and a weazen-faced, wide-eyed boy to his knees in it, holding out toward them two brown bones.

Dan spoke. "For God's sake, what are you doing here?"

Daniel spoke. "For God's sake, what are *these* doing here?"

Doc Martin spoke. "For God's sake!" That was all.

It wasn't that Dan was obstinate; it was simply that he was dazed.

"What are you doing here, son? Tell me!"

It wasn't that Daniel was sullen; it was simply that his legs were going to go out from under him at any moment now.

"What are these, father? You tell me!"

"Son—sonny—you're sick."

"I am sick. Who was Tom?"

"Good Lord alive! Dan! look here. Be quiet, Daniel; wait till I get through with him. Dan, how long ago was it—I mean, how old would this kid have been, that night?"

"What night do you mean?"

"Come out of it, man! That night when you heard where Tom had been the week before, and called me, and I brought the chloroform over, thinking maybe, perhaps, the dog might—"

"Dog!" High in the roof of a boy's mouth, the one syllable, echoing.

"—and you, Dan, no maybe or perhaps about it, you got him in the head

with the spade, thank God, in time. What I asked you—how old was Daniel then?”

“Not old enough to remember anything. . . . Daniel, who’s been telling you—”

But Doc Martin wouldn’t have it. “No, man, you talk to me. How old?”

“Two, perhaps. Not three. A baby. A babe in arms, actually, come to think of it. Vivian had him there in her arms.”

“Where?”

“There in the summerhouse.”

“Vivian—in the summerhouse?”

“Afterward. She—she had come there.”

“You’ve never told me.”

“No. I—it’s something I— Look here, Daniel, son, you’d best be—”

“No you don’t, Dan. Talk! What’s this about Vivian, and Daniel, and the summerhouse, afterward? Tell it, and tell it straight.”

“She was ill, that’s all. Frightened. And—and you know how she was about animals and things—and she didn’t understand. Couldn’t expect her to, not knowing anything. Hysterical. Went to the summerhouse to see—and bolted herself in.”

“But when you explained?”

“That’s it. I was a fool, I suppose. I tried to lie, at first. The mastiff was hers, from a pup; she adored him; it was all so sudden; I couldn’t bring myself to say the word—hydrophobia. A fool.”

“Yes, and a damned one.”

“She said she was afraid of me, Doc. She said it was—it was—”

“She said it was murder, father. And—it was only— *Father!*”

“Son! Lord! What’s the— Hey! Catch him, Doc, or he’ll fall.”

“Catch him yourself, he’s yours. Pick him up, fool. Starvation; don’t worry too much. Bring him along.”

“But if he should come to, and me carrying him. I’m afraid—”

“Don’t be. Not any more.”

JOHN COLLIER *Fantastic, even preposterous, subjects have often been used in literature, sometimes as sheer entertainment, sometimes as entertainment with a moral. John Collier (b. 1901), English poet, novelist, and writer of short stories, treats such subjects with a gleeful, malicious, or grim speed and neatness. His “Green Thoughts,” for example, in the volume by the same name (1932), not only is a good horror story in itself, but becomes in the end the delightful reductio ad absurdum of all such horror stories about man-eating plants as H. G. Wells’s “Flowering of the Strange Orchid.” Other characteristic works are his satiric novel, His Monkey Wife: or, Married to a Chimp (1930), Full Circle (1933), a fantasy of England destroyed by war and reduced to savagery in 1995, and Presenting Moonshine (1941), a collection of short stories like “Thus I Refute Beelzy.”*

THUS I REFUTE BEELZY

THERE goes the tea bell," said Mrs. Carter. "I hope Simon hears it." They looked out from the window of the drawing-room. The long garden, agreeably neglected, ended in a waste plot. Here a little summer-house was passing close by beauty on its way to complete decay. This was Simon's retreat: it was almost completely screened by the tangled branches of the apple tree and the pear tree, planted too close together, as they always are in suburban gardens. They caught a glimpse of him now and then, as he strutted up and down, mouthing and gesticulating, performing all the solemn mumbo-jumbo of small boys who spend long afternoons at the forgotten ends of long gardens.

"There he is, bless him," said Betty.

"Playing his game," said Mrs. Carter. "He won't play with the other children any more. And if I go down there—the temper! And comes in tired out."

"He doesn't have his sleep in the afternoons?" asked Betty.

"You know what Big Simon's ideas are," said Mrs. Carter. "'Let him choose for himself,' he says. That's what he chooses, and he comes in as white as a sheet."

"Look. He's heard the bell," said Betty. The expression was justified, though the bell had ceased ringing a full minute ago. Small Simon stopped in his parade exactly as if its tinny dingle had at that moment reached his ear. They watched him perform certain ritual sweeps and scratchings with his little stick, and come lagging over the hot and flaggy grass towards the house.

Mrs. Carter led the way down to the play-room, or garden-room, which was also the tea-room for hot days. It had been the huge scullery of this tall Georgian house. Now the walls were cream-washed, there was coarse blue net in the windows, canvas-covered armchairs on the stone floor, and a reproduction of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* over the mantelpiece.

Small Simon came drifting, and accorded Betty a perfunctory greeting. His face was an almost perfect triangle, pointed at the chin, and he was paler than he should have been. "The little elf-child!" cried Betty.

Simon looked at her. "No," said he.

At that moment the door opened, and Mr. Carter came in, rubbing his hands. He was a dentist, and washed them before and after everything he did. "You!" said his wife. "Home already!"

"Not unwelcome, I hope," said Mr. Carter, nodding to Betty. "Two people cancelled their appointments: I decided to come home. I said, I hope I am not unwelcome."

"Silly!" said his wife. "Of course not."

"Small Simon seems doubtful," continued Mr. Carter. "Small Simon, are you sorry to see me at tea with you?"

"Thus I Refute Beelzy." Reprinted by permission of Harold Matson.

"No, Daddy."

"No, what?"

"No, Big Simon."

"That's right. Big Simon and Small Simon. That sounds more like friends, doesn't it? At one time little boys had to call their father 'sir.' If they forgot—a good spanking. On the bottom, Small Simon! On the bottom!" said Mr. Carter, washing his hands once more with his invisible soap and water.

The little boy turned crimson with shame or rage.

"But now, you see," said Betty, to help, "you can call your father whatever you like."

"And what," asked Mr. Carter, "has Small Simon been doing this afternoon? While Big Simon has been at work."

"Nothing," muttered his son.

"Then you have been bored," said Mr. Carter. "Learn from experience, Small Simon. Tomorrow, do something amusing, and you will not be bored. I want him to learn from experience, Betty. That is my way, the new way."

"I have learned," said the boy, speaking like an old, tired man, as little boys so often do.

"It would hardly seem so," said Mr. Carter, "if you sit on your behind all the afternoon, doing nothing. Had *my* father caught me doing nothing, I should not have sat very comfortably."

"He played," said Mrs. Carter.

"A bit," said the boy, shifting on his chair.

"Too much," said Mrs. Carter. "He comes in all nervy and dazed. He ought to have his rest."

"He is six," said her husband. "He is a reasonable being. He must choose for himself. But what game is this, Small Simon, that is worth getting nervy and dazed over? There are very few games as good as all that."

"It's nothing," said the boy.

"Oh, come," said his father. "We are friends, are we not? You can tell me. I was a Small Simon once, just like you, and played the same games you play. Of course there were no aeroplanes in those days. With whom do you play this fine game? Come on, we must all answer civil questions, or the world would never go round. With whom do you play?"

"Mr. Beelzy," said the boy, unable to resist.

"Mr. Beelzy?" said his father, raising his eyebrows inquiringly at his wife.

"It's a game he makes up," said she.

"Not makes up!" cried the boy. "Fool!"

"That is telling stories," said his mother. "And rude as well. We had better talk of something different."

"No wonder he is rude," said Mr. Carter, "if you say he tells lies, and then insist on changing the subject. He tells you his fantasy: you implant a guilt feeling. What can you expect? A defence mechanism. Then you get a real lie."

"Like in *These Three*," said Betty. "Only different, of course. *She* was an unblushing little liar."

"I would have made her blush," said Mr. Carter, "in the proper part of her

anatomy. But Small Simon is in the fantasy stage. Are you not, Small Simon? You just make things up."

"No, I don't," said the boy.

"You do," said his father. "And because you do, it is not too late to reason with you. There is no harm in a fantasy, old chap. There is no harm in a bit of make-believe. Only you have to know the difference between day dreams and real things, or your brain will never grow. It will never be the brain of a Big Simon. So come on. Let us hear about this Mr. Beelzy of yours. Come on. What is he like?"

"He isn't like anything," said the boy.

"Like nothing on earth?" said his father. "That's a terrible fellow."

"I'm not frightened of him," said the child, smiling. "Not a bit."

"I should hope not," said his father. "If you were, you would be frightening yourself. I am always telling people, older people than you are, that they are just frightening themselves. Is he a funny man? Is he a giant?"

"Sometimes he is," said the little boy.

"Sometimes one thing, sometimes another," said his father. "Sounds pretty vague. Why can't you tell us just what he's like?"

"I love him," said the small boy. "He loves me."

"That's a big word," said Mr. Carter. "That might be better kept for real things, like Big Simon and Small Simon."

"He is real," said the boy, passionately. "He's not a fool. He's real."

"Listen," said his father. "When you go down the garden there's nobody there. Is there?"

"No," said the boy.

"Then you think of him, inside your head, and he comes."

"No," said Small Simon. "I have to do something with my stick."

"That doesn't matter."

"Yes, it does."

"Small Simon, you are being obstinate," said Mr. Carter. "I am trying to explain something to you. I have been longer in the world than you have, so naturally I am older and wiser. I am explaining that Mr. Beelzy is a fantasy of yours. Do you hear? Do you understand?"

"Yes, Daddy."

"He is a game. He is a let's-pretend."

The little boy looked down at his plate, smiling resignedly.

"I hope you are listening to me," said his father. "All you have to do is to say, 'I have been playing a game of let's-pretend. With someone I make up, called Mr. Beelzy.' Then no one will say you tell lies, and you will know the difference between dreams and reality. Mr. Beelzy is a day dream."

The little boy still stared at his plate.

"He is sometimes there and sometimes not there," pursued Mr. Carter. "Sometimes he's like one thing, sometimes another. You can't really see him. Not as you see me. I am real. You can't touch him. You can touch me. I can touch you." Mr. Carter stretched out his big, white, dentist's hand, and

took his little son by the shoulder. He stopped speaking for a moment and tightened his hand. The little boy sank his head still lower.

"Now you know the difference," said Mr. Carter, "between a pretend and a real thing. You and I are one thing; he is another. Which is the pretend? Come on. Answer me. What is the pretend?"

"Big Simon and Small Simon," said the little boy.

"Don't!" cried Betty, and at once put her hand over her mouth, for why should a visitor cry "Don't!" when a father is explaining things in a scientific and modern way?

"Well, my boy," said Mr. Carter, "I have said you must be allowed to learn from experience. Go upstairs. Right up to your room. You shall learn whether it is better to reason, or to be perverse and obstinate. Go up. I shall follow you."

"You are not going to beat the child?" cried Mrs. Carter.

"No," said the little boy. "Mr. Beelzy won't let him."

"Go on up with you!" shouted his father.

Small Simon stopped at the door. "He said he wouldn't let anyone hurt me," he whimpered. "He said he'd come like a lion, with wings on, and eat them up."

"You'll learn how real he is!" shouted his father after him. "If you can't learn it at one end, you shall learn it at the other. I'll have your breeches down. I shall finish my cup of tea first, however," said he to the two women.

Neither of them spoke. Mr. Carter finished his tea, and unhurriedly left the room, washing his hands with his invisible soap and water.

Mrs. Carter said nothing. Betty could think of nothing to say. She wanted to be talking: she was afraid of what they might hear.

Suddenly it came. It seemed to tear the air apart. "Good God!" she cried. "What was that? He's hurt him." She sprang out of her chair, her silly eyes flashing behind her glasses. "I'm going up there!" she cried, trembling.

"Yes, let us go up," said Mrs. Carter. "Let us go up. That was not Small Simon."

It was on the second-floor landing that they found the shoe, with the man's foot still in it, like that last morsel of a mouse which sometimes falls from the jaws of a hasty cat.

Group 2

RING LARDNER *Although he first won fame as a humorist when he created his professional baseball player, Jack Keefe, in You Know Me, Al (1916), Ring Lardner (1885-1933) is not thought of today primarily as a humorist. Rather he appears a critic of American vulgarity certainly no less bitter than Sinclair Lewis. His mastery of the idiom of the half-educated and the illiterate is unsurpassed. His numerous volumes of short stories were collected and reprinted in Round Up (1929). One of the best of these volumes is How to Write Short Stories (With Samples) (1925), containing "Some Like Them Cold."*

SOME LIKE THEM COLD

N. Y., Aug. 3.

Dear Miss Gillespie: How about our bet now as you bet me I would forget all about you the minute I hit the big town and would never write you a letter. Well girly it looks like you lose so pay me. Seriously we will call all bets off as I am not the kind that bet on a sure thing and it sure was a sure thing that I would not forget a girly like you and all that is worrying me is whether it may not be the other way round and you are wondering who this fresh guy is that is writeing you this letter. I bet you are so will try and refreshen your memory.

Well girly I am the handsome young man that was wondering round the Lasalle st. station Monday and "happened" to sit down beside of a mighty pretty girly who was waiting to meet her sister from Toledo and the train was late and I am glad of it because if it had not of been that little girly and I would never of met. So for once I was a lucky guy but still I guess it was time I had some luck as it was certainly tough luck for you and I to both be liveing in Chi all that time and never get together till a half hour before I was leaveing town for good.

Still "better late than never" you know and maybe we can make up for lost time though it looks like we would have to do our makeing up at long distants unless you make good on your threat and come to N. Y. I wish you would do that little thing girly as it looks like that was the only way we

"Some Like Them Cold," from *How to Write Short Stories* by Ring W. Lardner. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

would get a chance to play round together as it looks like they was little or no chance of me comeing back to Chi as my whole future is in the big town. N. Y. is the only spot and specially for a man that expects to make my living in the song writeing game as here is the Mecca for that line of work and no matter how good a man may be they don't get no recognition unless they live in N. Y.

Well girlie you asked me to tell you all about my trip. Well I remember you saying that you would give anything to be makeing it yourself but as far as the trip itself was conserved you ought to be thankfull you did not have to make it as you would of sweat your head off. I know I did specially wile going through Ind. Monday p.m. but Monday night was the worst of all trying to sleep and finely I give it up and just layed there with the prespiration rolling off of me though I was laying on top of the covers and nothing on but my underwear.

Yesterday was not so bad as it rained most of the A.M. comeing through N. Y. state and in the p.m. we road along side of the Hudson all p.m. Some river girlie and just looking at it makes a man forget all about the heat and everything else except a certain girlie who I seen for the first time Monday and then only for a half hour but she is the kind of a girlie that a man don't need to see her only once and they would be no danger of forgetting her. There I guess I better lay off that subject or you will think I am a "fresh guy."

Well that is about all to tell you about the trip only they was one amuseing incidence that come off yesterday which I will tell you. Well they was a dame got on the train at Toledo Monday and had the birth opp. mine but I did not see nothing of her that night as I was out smokeing till late and she hit the hay early but yesterday A.M. she come in the dinner and sit at the same table with me and tried to make me and it was so raw that the dinge waiter seen it and give me the wink and of course I paid no tension and I waited till she got through so as they would be no danger of her folling me out but she stopped on the way out to get a tooth pick and when I come out she was out on the platform with it so I tried to brush right by but she spoke up and asked me what time it was and I told her and she said she geussed her watch was slow so I said maybe it just seemed slow on acct. of the company it was in.

I don't know if she got what I was driveing at or not but any way she give up trying to make me and got off at Albany. She was a good looker but I have no time for gals that tries to make strangers on a train.

Well if I don't quit you will think I am writeing a book but will expect a long letter in answer to this letter and we will see if you can keep your promise like I have kept mine. Don't dissapoint me girlie as I am all alone in a large city and hearing from you will keep me from getting home sick for old Chi though I never thought so much of the old town till I found out you lived there. Don't think that is kidding girlie as I mean it.

You can address me at this hotel as it looks like I will be here right along as it is on 47ty st. right off of old Broadway and handy to everything and

am only paying \$21 per wk. for my rm. and could of got one for \$16 but without bath but am glad to pay the differents as am lost without my bath in the A.M. and sometimes at night too.

Tomorrow I expect to commence fighting the "battle of Broadway" and will let you know how I come out that is if you answer this letter. In the mean wile girlie au reservoir and don't do nothing I would not do.

Your new friend (?)

Chas. F. Lewis.

Chicago, Ill., Aug. 6.

My Dear Mr. Lewis: Well, that certainly was a "surprise party" getting your letter and you are certainly a "wonder man" to keep your word as I am afraid most men of your sex are gay deceivers but maybe you are "different." Any way it sure was a surprise and will gladly pay the bet if you will just tell me what it was we bet. Hope it was not money as I am a "working girl" but if it was not more than a dollar or two will try to dig it up even if I have to "beg, borrow or steal."

Suppose you will think me a "case" to make a bet and then forget what it was, but you must remember, Mr. Man, that I had just met you and was "dazzled." Joking aside I was rather "fussed" and will tell you why. Well, Mr. Lewis, I suppose you see lots of girls like the one you told me about that you saw on the train who tried to "get acquainted" but I want to assure you that I am not one of those kind and sincerely hope you will believe me when I tell you that you was the first man I ever spoke to meeting them like that and my friends and the people who know me would simply faint if they knew I ever spoke to a man without a "proper introduction."

Believe me, Mr. Lewis, I am not that kind and I don't know now why I did it only that you was so "different" looking if you know what I mean and not at all like the kind of men that usually try to force their attentions on every pretty girl they see. Lots of times I act on impulse and let my feelings run away from me and sometimes I do things on the impulse of the moment which I regret them later on, and that is what I did this time, but hope you won't give me cause to regret it and I know you won't as I know you are not that kind of a man a specially after what you told me about the girl on the train. But any way as I say, I was in a "daze" so can't remember what it was we bet, but will try and pay it if it does not "break" me.

Sis's train got in about ten minutes after yours had gone and when she saw me what do you think was the first thing she said? Well, Mr. Lewis, she said: "Why Mibs (That is a pet name some of my friends have given me) what has happened to you? I never seen you have as much color." So I passed it off with some remark about the heat and changed the subject as I certainly was not going to tell her that I had just been talking to a man who I had never met or she would of dropped dead from the shock. Either that or she would not of believed me as it would be hard for a person who knows me well to imagine me doing a thing like that as I have quite a reputation for

"squelching" men who try to act fresh. I don't mean anything personal by that, Mr. Lewis, as am a good judge of character and could tell without you telling me that you are not that kind.

Well, Sis and I have been on the "go" ever since she arrived as I took yesterday and today off so I could show her the "sights" though she says she would be perfectly satisfied to just sit in the apartment and listen to me "rattle on." Am afraid I am a great talker, Mr. Lewis, but Sis says it is as good as a show to hear me talk as I tell things in such a different way as I cannot help from seeing the humorous side of everything and she says she never gets tired of listening to me, but of course she is my sister and thinks the world of me, but she really does laugh like she enjoyed my craziness.

Maybe I told you that I have a tiny little apartment which a girl friend of mine and I have together and it is hardly big enough to turn round in, but still it is "home" and I am a great home girl and hardly ever care to go out evenings except occasionally to the theatre or dance. But even if our "nest" is small we are proud of it and Sis complimented us on how cozy it is and how "homey" it looks and she said she did not see how we could afford to have everything so nice and Edith (my girl friend) said: "Mibs deserves all the credit for that. I never knew a girl who could make a little money go a long ways like she can." Well, of course she is my best friend and always saying nice things about me, but I do try and I hope I get results. Have always said that good taste and being careful is a whole lot more important than lots of money though it is nice to have it.

You must write and tell me how you are getting along in the "battle of Broadway" (I laughed when I read that) and whether the publishers like your songs though I know they will. Am crazy to hear them and hear you play the piano as I love good jazz music even better than classical, though I suppose it is terrible to say such a thing. But I usually say just what I think though sometimes I wish afterwards I had not of. But still I believe it is better for a girl to be her own self and natural instead of always acting. But am afraid I will never have a chance to hear you play unless you come back to Chi and pay us a visit as my "threat" to come to New York was just a "threat" and I don't see any hope of ever getting there unless some rich New Yorker should fall in love with me and take me there to live. Fine chance for poor little me, eh Mr. Lewis?

Well, I guess I have "rattled on" long enough and you will think I am writing a book unless I quit and besides, Sis has asked me as a special favor to make her a pie for dinner. Maybe you don't know it, Mr. Man, but I am quite famous for my pie and pastry, but I don't suppose a "genius" is interested in common things like that.

Well, be sure and write soon and tell me what N. Y. is like and all about it and don't forget the little girlie who was "bad" and spoke to a strange man in the station and have been blushing over it ever since.

Your friend (?)

Mabelle Gillespie.

N. Y., Aug. 10.

Dear Girlie: I bet you will think I am a fresh guy commenceing that way but Miss Gillespie is too cold and a man can not do nothing cold in this kind of weather specially in this man's town which is the hottest place I ever been in and I guess maybe the reason why New Yorkers is so bad is because they think they are all ready in H—— and can not go no worse place no matter how they behave themselves. Honest girlie I certainly envy you being where there is a breeze off the old Lake and Chi may be dirty but I never heard of nobody dying because they was dirty but four people died here yesterday on acct. of the heat and I seen two different women flop right on Broadway and had to be taken away in the ambulance and it could not of been because they was dressed too warm because it would be impossible for the women here to leave off any more cloths.

Well have not had much luck yet in the battle of Broadway as all the heads of the big music publishers is out of town on their vacation and the big boys is the only ones I will do business with as it would be silly for a man with the stuff I have got to waste my time on somebody that is just on the staff and have not got the final say. But I did play a couple of my numbers for the people up to Levy's and Goebel's and they went crazy over them in both places. So it looks like all I have to do is wait for the big boys to get back and then play my numbers for them and I will be all set. What I want is to get taken on the staff of one of the big firms as that gives a man the inside and they will plug your numbers more if you are on the staff. In the mean wile have not got nothing to worry me but am just seeing the sights of the big town as have saved up enough money to play round for a wile and any way a man that can play piano like I can don't never have to worry about starveing. Can certainly make the old music box talk girlie and am always good for a \$75 or \$100 job.

Well have been here a week now and on the go every minute and I thought I would be lonesome down here but no chance of that as I have been treated fine by the people I have met and have sure met a bunch of them. One of the boys liveing in the hotel is a vaudeville actor and he is a member of the Friars Club and took me over there to dinner the other night and some way another the bunch got wise that I could play piano so of course I had to sit down and give them some of my numbers and everybody went crazy over them. One of the boys I met there was Paul Sears the song writer but he just writes the lyrics and has wrote a bunch of hits and when he heard some of my melodies he called me over to one side and said he would like to work with me on some numbers. How is that girlie as he is one of the biggest hit writers in N. Y.

N. Y. has got some mighty pretty girlies and I guess it would not be hard to get acquainted with them and in fact several of them has tried to make me since I been here but I always figure that a girl must be something wrong with her if she tries to make a man that she don't know nothing about so I pass them all up. But I did meet a couple of pips that a man here in the hotel went up on Riverside Drive to see them and insisted on me going along and

they got on some way that I could make a piano talk so they was nothing but I must play for them so I sit down and played some of my own stuff and they went crazy over it.

One of the girls wanted I should come up and see her again, and I said I might but I think I better keep away as she acted like she wanted to vamp me and I am not the kind that likes to play round with a gal just for their company and dance with them etc. but when I see the right gal that will be a different thing and she won't have to beg me to come and see her as I will camp right on her trail till she says yes. And it won't be none of these N. Y. fly by nights neither. They are all right to look at but a man would be a sucker to get serious with them as they might take you up and the next thing you know you would have a wife on your hands that don't know a dish rag from a waffle iron.

Well girlie will quit and call it a day as it is too hot to write any more and I guess I will turn on the cold water and lay in the tub a wile and then turn in. Don't forget to write to

Your friend,

Chas. F. Lewis.

Dear Mr. Man: Hope you won't think me a "silly Billy" for starting my letter that way but "Mr. Lewis" is so formal and "Charles" is too much the other way and any way I would not dare call a man by their first name after only knowing them only two weeks. Though I may as well confess that Charles is my favorite name for a man and have always been crazy about it as it was my father's name. Poor old dad, he died of cancer three years ago, but left enough insurance so that mother and we girls were well provided for and do not have to do anything to support ourselves though I have been earning my own living for two years to make things easier for mother and also because I simply can't bear to be doing nothing as I feel like a "drone." So I flew away from the "home nest" though mother felt bad about it as I was her favorite and she always said I was such a comfort to her as when I was in the house she never had to worry about how things would go.

But there I go gossiping about my domestic affairs just like you would be interested in them though I don't see how you could be though personly I always like to know all about my friends, but I know men are different so will try and not bore you any longer. Poor Man, I certainly feel sorry for you if New York is as hot as all that. I guess it has been very hot in Chi, too, at least everybody has been complaining about how terrible it is. Suppose you will wonder why I say "I guess" and you will think I ought to know if it is hot. Well, sir, the reason I say "I guess" is because I don't feel the heat like others do or at least I don't let myself feel it. That sounds crazy I know, but don't you think there is a good deal in mental suggestion and not letting yourself feel things? I believe that if a person simply won't allow themselves to be affected by disagreeable things, why such things won't bother them near as much. I know it works with me and that is the reason why I am never

cross when things go wrong and "keep smiling" no matter what happens and as far as the heat is concerned, why I just don't let myself feel it and my friends say I don't even look hot no matter if the weather is boiling and Edith, my girl friend, often says that I am like a breeze and it cools her off just to have me come in the room. Poor Edie suffers terribly during the hot weather and says it almost makes her mad at me to see how cool and unruffled I look when everybody else is perspiring and have red faces etc.

I laughed when I read what you said about New York being so hot that people thought it was the "other place." I can appreciate a joke, Mr. Man, and that one did not go "over my head." Am still laughing at some of the things you said in the station though they probably struck me funnier than they would most girls as I always see the funny side and sometimes something is said and I laugh and the others wonder what I am laughing at as they cannot see anything in it themselves, but it is just the way I look at things so of course I cannot explain to them why I laughed and they think I am crazy. But I had rather part with almost anything rather than my sense of humour as it helps me over a great many rough spots.

Sis has gone back home though I would of liked to of kept her here much longer, but she had to go though she said she would of liked nothing better than to stay with me and just listen to me "rattle on." She always says it is just like a show to hear me talk as I always put things in such a funny way and for weeks after she has been visiting me she thinks of some of the things I said and laughs over them. Since she left Edith and I have been pretty quiet though poor Edie wants to be on the "go" all the time and tries to make me go out with her every evening to the pictures and scolds me when I say I had rather stay home and read and calls me a "book worm." Well, it is true that I had rather stay home with a good book than go to some crazy old picture and the last two nights I have been reading myself to sleep with Robert W. Service's poems. Don't you love Service or don't you care for "highbrow" writings?

Personally there is nothing I love more than to just sit and read a good book or sit and listen to somebody play the piano, I mean if they can really play and I really believe I like popular music better than the classical though I suppose that is a terrible thing to confess, but I love all kinds of music but a specially the piano when it is played by somebody who can really play.

Am glad you have not "fallen" for the "ladies" who have tried to make your acquaintance in New York. You are right in thinking there must be something wrong with girls who try to "pick up" strange men as no girl with self respect would do such a thing and when I say that, Mr. Man, I know you will think it is a funny thing for me to say on account of the way our friendship started, but I mean it and I assure you that was the first time I ever done such a thing in my life and would never of thought of doing it had I not known you were the right kind of a man as I flatter myself that I am a good judge of character and can tell pretty well what a person is like by just looking at them and I assure you I had made up my mind what kind of a man you were before I allowed myself to answer your opening remark. Otherwise I am

the last girl in the world that would allow myself to speak to a person without being introduced to them.

When you write again you must tell me all about the girl on Riverside Drive and what she looks like and if you went to see her again and all about her. Suppose you will think I am a little old "curiosity shop" for asking all those questions and will wonder why I want to know. Well, sir, I won't tell you why, so there, but I insist on you answering all questions and will scold you if you don't. Maybe you will think that the reason why I am so curious is because I am "jealous" of the lady in question. Well, sir, I won't tell you whether I am or not, but will keep you "guessing." Now, don't you wish you knew?

Must close or you will think I am going to "rattle on" forever or maybe you have all ready become disgusted and torn my letter up. If so all I can say is poor little me—she was a nice little girl and meant well, but the man did not appreciate her.

There! Will stop or you will think I am crazy if you do not all ready.

Yours (?)

Maybelle.

N. Y., Aug. 20.

Dear Girlie: Well girlie I suppose you thought I was never going to answer your letter but have been busier than a one armed paper hanger the last week as have been working on a number with Paul Sears who is one of the best lyric writers in N. Y. and has turned out as many hits as Berlin or Davis or any of them. And believe me girlie he has turned out another hit this time that is he and I have done it together. It is all done now and we are just waiting for the best chance to place it but will not place it nowheres unless we get the right kind of a deal but maybe will publish it ourselves.

The song is bound to go over big as Sears has wrote a great lyric and I have give it a great tune or at least every body that has heard it goes crazy over it and it looks like it would go over bigger than any song since Mammy and would not be surprised to see it come out the hit of the year. If it is handled right we will make a bbl. of money and Sears says it is a cinch we will clean up as much as \$25000 apiece which is pretty fair for one song but this one is not like the most of them but has got a great lyric and I have wrote a melody that will knock them out of their seats. I only wish you could hear it girlie and hear it the way I play it. I had to play it over and over about 50 times at the Friars last night.

I will copy down the lyric of the chorus so you can see what it is like and get the idea of the song though of course you can't tell much about it unless you hear it played and sang. The title of the song is When They're Like You and here is the chorus:

Some like them hot, some like them cold.
Some like them when they're not too darn old.
Some like them fat, some like them lean.
Some like them only at sweet sixteen.

Some like them dark, some like them light.
Some like them in the park, late at night.
Some like them fickle, some like them true,
But the time I like them is when they're like you.

How is that for a lyric and I only wish I could play my melody for you as you would go nuts over it but will send you a copy as soon as the song is published and you can get some of your friends to play it over for you and I know you will like it though it is a different melody when I play it or when somebody else plays it.

Well girlie you will see how busy I have been and am libel to keep right on being busy as we are not going to let the grass grow under our feet but as soon as we have got this number placed we will get busy on another one as a couple like that will put me on Easy st. even if they don't go as big as we expect but even 25 grand is a big bunch of money and if a man could only turn out one hit a year and make that much out of it I would be on Easy st. and no more hammering on the old music box in some cabaret.

Who ever we take the song to we will make them come across with one grand for advance royaltys and that will keep me going till I can turn out another one. So the future looks bright and rosey to yours truly and I am certainly glad I come to the big town though sorry I did not do it a whole lot quicker.

This is a great old town girlie and when you have lived here a wile you wonder how you ever stood for a burg like Chi which is just a hick town along side of this besides being dirty etc. and a man is a sucker to stay there all their life specially a man in my line of work as N. Y. is the Mecca for a man that has got the musical gift. I figure that all the time I spent in Chi I was just wasteing my time and never really started to live till I come down here and I have to laugh when I think of the boys out there that is trying to make a liveing in the song writeing game and most of them starve to death all their life and the first week I am down here I meet a man like Sears and the next thing you know we have turned out a song that will make us a fortune.

Well girlie you asked me to tell you about the girlie up on the Drive that tried to make me and asked me to come and see her again. Well I can assure you you have no reasons to be jealous in that quarter as I have not been back to see her as I figure it is wasteing my time to play round with a dame like she that wants to go out somewheres every night and if you married her she would want a house on 5th ave. with a dozen servants so I have passed her up as that is not my idea of home.

What I want when I get married is a real home where a man can stay home and work and maybe have a few of his friends in once in a wile and entertain them or go to a good musical show once in a wile and have a wife that is in sympathy with you and not nag at you all the wile but be a real help mate. The girlie up on the Drive would run me ragged and have me in the poor house inside of a year even if I was makeing 25 grand out of one song.

Besides she wears a make up that you would have to blast to find out what her face looks like. So I have not been back there and don't intend to see her again so what is the use of me telling you about her. And the only other girlie I have met is a sister of Paul Sears who I met up to his house while we was working on the song but she don't hardly count as she has not got no use for the boys but treats them like dirt and Paul says she is the coldest proposition he ever seen.

Well I don't know no more to write and besides have got a date to go out to Paul's place for dinner and play some of my stuff for him so as he can see if he wants to set words to some more of my melodies. Well don't do nothing I would not do and have as good a time as you can in old Chi and will let you know how we come along with the song.

Chas. F. Lewis.

Chicago, Ill., Aug. 23.

Dear Mr. Man: I am thrilled to death over the song and think the words awfully pretty and am crazy to hear the music which I know must be great. It must be wonderful to have the gift of writing songs and then hear people play and sing them and just think of making \$25,000 in such a short time. My, how rich you will be and I certainly congratulate you though am afraid when you are rich and famous you will have no time for insignificant little me or will you be an exception and remember your "old" friends even when you are up in the world? I sincerely hope so.

Will look forward to receiving a copy of the song and will you be sure and put your name on it? I am all ready very conceited just to think that I know a man that writes songs and makes all that money.

Seriously I wish you success with your next song and I laughed when I read your remark about being busier than a one armed paper hanger. I don't see how you think up all those comparisons and crazy things to say. The next time one of the girls asks me to go out with them I am going to tell them I can't go because I am busier than a one armed paper hanger and then they will think I made it up and say: "The girl is clever."

Seriously I am glad you did not go back to see the girl on the Drive and am also glad you don't like girls who makes themselves up so much as I think it is disgusting and would rather go round looking like a ghost than put artificial color on my face. Fortunately I have a complexion that does not need "fixing" but even if my coloring was not what it is I would never think of lowering myself to "fix" it. But I must tell you a joke that happened just the other day when Edith and I were out at lunch and there was another girl in the restaurant whom Edie knew and she introduced her to me and I noticed how this girl kept staring at me and finally she begged my pardon and asked if she could ask me a personal question and I said yes and she asked me if my complexion was really "mine." I assured her it was and she said: "Well, I thought so because I did not think anybody could put it on so artistically. I certainly envy you." Edie and I both laughed.

Well, if that girl envies me my complexion, why I envy you living in New York. Chicago is rather dirty though I don't let that part of it bother me as I bathe and change my clothing so often that the dirt does not have time to "settle." Edie often says she cannot see how I always keep so clean looking and says I always look like I had just stepped out of a band box. She also calls me a fish (jokingly) because I spend so much time in the water. But seriously I do love to bathe and never feel so happy as when I have just "cleaned up" and put on fresh clothing.

Edie has just gone out to see a picture and was cross at me because I would not go with her. I told her I was going to write a letter and she wanted to know to whom and I told her and she said: "You write to him so often that a person would almost think you was in love with him." I just laughed and turned it off, but she does say the most embarrassing things and I would be angry if it was anybody but she that said them.

Seriously I had much rather sit here and write letters or read or just sit and dream than go out to some crazy old picture show except once in awhile I do like to go to the theater and see a good play and a specially a musical play if the music is catchy. But as a rule I am contented to just stay home and feel cozy and lots of evenings Edie and I sit here without saying hardly a word to each other though she would love to talk but she knows I had rather be quiet and she often says it is just like living with a deaf and dumb mute to live with me because I make so little noise round the apartment. I guess I was born to be a home body as I so seldom care to go "gadding."

Though I do love to have company once in awhile, just a few congenial friends whom I can talk to and feel at home with and play cards or have some music. My friends love to drop in here, too, as they say Edie and I always give them such nice things to eat. Though poor Edie has not much to do with it, I am afraid, as she hates anything connected with cooking which is one of the things I love best of anything and I often say that when I begin keeping house in my own home I will insist on doing most of my own work as I would take so much more interest in it than a servant, though I would want somebody to help me a little if I could afford it as I often think a woman that does all her own work is liable to get so tired that she loses interest in the bigger things of life like books and music. Though after all what bigger thing is there than home making a specially for a woman?

I am sitting in the dearest old chair that I bought yesterday at a little store on the North Side. That is my one extravagance, buying furniture and things for the house, but I always say it is economy in the long run as I will always have them and have use for them and when I can pick them up at a bargain I would be silly not to. Though heaven knows I will never be "poor" in regards to furniture and rugs and things like that as mother's house in Toledo is full of lovely things which she says she is going to give Sis and myself as soon as we have real homes of our own. She is going to give me the first choice as I am her favorite. She has the loveliest old things that you could not buy now for love or money including lovely old rugs and a piano which Sis wanted

to have a player attachment put on it but I said it would be an insult to the piano so we did not get one. I am funny about things like that, a specially old furniture and feel towards them like people whom I love.

Poor mother, I am afraid she won't live much longer to enjoy her lovely old things as she has been suffering for years from stomach trouble and the doctor says it has been worse lately instead of better and her heart is weak besides. I am going home to see her a few days this fall as it may be the last time. She is very cheerful and always says she is ready to go now as she has had enough joy out of life and all she would like would be to see her girls settled down in their own homes before she goes.

There I go, talking about my domestic affairs again and I will bet you are bored to death though personally I am never bored when my friends tell me about themselves. But I won't "rattle on" any longer, but will say good night and don't forget to write and tell me how you come out with the song and thanks for sending me the words to it. Will you write a song about me some time? I would be thrilled to death! But I am afraid I am not the kind of girl that inspires men to write songs about them, but am just a quiet "mouse" that loves home and am not giddy enough to be the heroine of a song.

Well, Mr. Man, good night and don't wait so long before writing again to
Yours (?)

Mabelle.

N. Y., Sept. 8.

Dear Girlie: Well girlie have not got your last letter with me so cannot answer what was in it as I have forgotten if there was anything I was supposed to answer and besides have only a little time to write as I have a date to go out on a party with the Sears. We are going to the Georgie White show and afterwards somewhere for supper. Sears is the boy who wrote the lyric to my song and it is him and his sister I am going on the party with. The sister is a cold fish that has no use for men but she is show crazy and insists on Paul taking her to 3 or 4 of them a week.

Paul wants me to give up my room here and come and live with them as they have plenty of room and I am running a little low on money but don't know if I will do it or not as am afraid I would freeze to death in the same house with a girl like the sister as she is ice cold but she don't hang round the house much as she is always taking trips or going to shows or somewhere.

So far we have not had no luck with the song. All the publishers we have showed it to has went crazy over it but they won't make the right kind of a deal with us and if they don't loosen up and give us a decent royalty rate we are libel to put the song out ourselves and show them up. The man up to Goebel's told us the song was O.K. and he liked it but it was more of a production number than anything else and ought to go in a show like the Follies but they won't be in N. Y. much longer and what we ought to do is hold it till next spring.

Mean while I am working on some new numbers and also have taken a posi-

tion with the orchestra at the Wilton and am going to work there starting next week. They pay good money \$60 and it will keep me going.

Well girly that is about all the news. I believe you said your father was sick and hope he is better and also hope you are getting along O. K. and take care of yourself. When you have nothing else to do write to your friend,

Chas. F. Lewis.

Chicago, Ill., Sept. 11.

Dear Mr. Lewis: Your short note reached me yesterday and must say I was puzzled when I read it. It sounded like you was mad at me though I cannot think of any reason why you should be. If there was something I said in my last letter that offended you I wish you would tell me what it was and I will ask your pardon though I cannot remember anything I could of said that you could take offense at. But if there was something, why I assure you, Mr. Lewis, that I did not mean anything by it. I certainly did not intend to offend you in any way.

Perhaps it is nothing I wrote you, but you are worried on account of the publishers not treating you fair in regards to your song and that is why your letter sounded so distant. If that is the case I hope that by this time matters have rectified themselves and the future looks brighter. But any way, Mr. Lewis, don't allow yourself to worry over business cares as they will all come right in the end and I always think it is silly for people to worry themselves sick over temporary troubles, but the best way is to "keep smiling" and look for the "silver lining" in the cloud. That is the way I always do and no matter what happens, I manage to smile and my girl friend, Edie, calls me Sunny because I always look on the bright side.

Remember also, Mr. Lewis, that \$60 is a salary that a great many men would like to be getting and are living on less than that and supporting a wife and family on it. I always say that a person can get along on whatever amount they make if they manage things in the right way.

So if it is business troubles, Mr. Lewis, I say don't worry, but look on the bright side. But if it is something I wrote in my last letter that offended you I wish you would tell me what it was so I can apologize as I assure you I meant nothing and would not say anything to hurt you for the world.

Please let me hear from you soon as I will not feel comfortable until I know I am not to blame for the sudden change.

Sincerely,

Mabelle Gillespie.

N. Y., Sept. 24.

Dear Miss Gillespie: Just a few lines to tell you the big news or at least it is big news to me. I am engaged to be married to Paul Sears' sister and we are going to be married early next month and live in Atlantic City where the orchestra I have been playing with has got an engagement in one of the big cabarets.

I know this will be a surprise to you as it was even a surprise to me as I did not think I would ever have the nerve to ask the girlie the big question as she was always so cold and acted like I was just in the way. But she said she supposed she would have to marry somebody some time and she did not dislike me as much as most of the other men her brother brought round and she would marry me with the understanding that she would not have to be a slave and work round the house and also I would have to take her to a show or somewheres every night and if I could not take her myself she would "run wild" alone. Atlantic City will be O. K. for that as a lot of new shows opens down there and she will be able to see them before they get to the big town. As for her being a slave, I would hate to think of marrying a girl and then have them spend their lives in druggery round the house. We are going to live in a hotel till we find something better but will be in no hurry to start house keeping as we will have to buy all new furniture.

Betsy is some doll when she is all fixed up and believe me she knows how to fix herself up. I don't know what she uses but it is weather proof as I have been out in a rain storm with her and we both got drowned but her face stayed on. I would almost think it was real only she tells me different.

Well girlie I may write to you again once in a while as Betsy says she don't give a dam if I write to all the girls in the world just so I don't make her read the answers but that is all I can think of to say now except good bye and good luck and may the right man come along soon and he will be a lucky man getting a girl that is such a good cook and got all that furniture etc.

But just let me give you a word of advice before I close and that is don't never speak to strange men who you don't know nothing about as they may get you wrong and think you are trying to make them. It just happened that I knew better so you was lucky in my case but the luck might not last.

Your friend,

Chas. F. Lewis.

Chicago, Ill., Sept. 27.

My dear Mr. Lewis: Thanks for your advice and also thank your fiance for her generosity in allowing you to continue your correspondence with her "rivals," but personly I have no desire to take advantage of that generosity as I have something better to do than read letters from a man like you, a specially as I have a man friend who is not so generous as Miss Sears and would strongly object to my continuing a correspondence with another man. It is at his request that I am writing this note to tell you not to expect to hear from me again.

Allow me to congratulate you on your engagement to Miss Sears and I am sure she is to be congratulated too, though if I met the lady I would be tempted to ask her to tell me her secret, namely how she is going to "run wild" on \$60.

Sincerely,

Mabelle Gillespie.

JAMES THURBER (*b. 1894*) appears never to cease drawing his haunting men, women, and dogs, which illustrate his works so well. He is an accomplished parodist, his parodies ranging from the inspired nonsense of "The Macbeth Murder Mystery" (the tale of a detective-story addict who got Macbeth by mistake and read it as a murder mystery) to the extensive and learned burlesque of pseudo-psychological success-books in *Let Your Mind Alone* (1937). *Fables for Our Times* (1940) consists of amusing stories with such caustic morals as "Don't get it right, just get it written." In short, most of Thurber's works, like his collections of humorous sketches and stories, *The Owl in the Attic and Other Perplexities* (1931), *The Seal in the Bedroom and Other Predicaments* (1932), *My Life and Hard Times* (1933), *The Middle-Aged Man on the Flying Trapeze* (1935), and *My World—And Welcome To It* (1942), often prove, on second thought, to be not quite so funny as they seemed at first. Obeying a unique impulse, he and his friend Elliott Nugent, the actor, once wrote a highly successful play, *The Male Animal* (1940).

THE WHIP-POOR-WILL

THE NIGHT had just begun to get pale around the edges when the whip-poor-will began. Kinstrey, who slept in a back room on the first floor, facing the meadow and the strip of woods beyond, heard a blind man tapping and a bugle calling and a woman screaming "Help! Police!" The sergeant in gray was cutting open envelopes with a sword. "Sit down there, sit down there, sit down there!" he chanted at Kinstrey. "Sit down there, cut your throat, cut your throat, whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will!" And Kinstrey woke up.

He opened his eyes, but lay without moving for several minutes, separating the fantastic morning from the sounds and symbols of his dream. There was the palest wash of light in the room. Kinstrey scowled through tousled hair at his wristwatch and saw that it was ten minutes past four. "Whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will!" The bird sounded very near—in the grass outside the window, perhaps. Kinstrey got up and went to the window in his bare feet and looked out. You couldn't tell where the thing was. The sound was all around you, incredibly loud and compelling and penetrating. Kinstrey had never heard a whip-poor-will so near at hand before. He had heard them as a boy in Ohio in the country, but he remembered their call as faint and plaintive and faraway, dying before long somewhere between the hills and the horizon. You didn't hear the bird often in Ohio, it came back to him, and it almost never ventured as close to a house or barn as this brazen-breasted bird murdering sleep out there along the fence line somewhere.

"The Whip-Poor-Will," from *My World—And Welcome To It*, copyright, 1942, by James Thurber. By permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

"Whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will!" Kinstrey climbed back into bed and began to count; the bird did twenty-seven whips without pausing. His lungs must be built like a pelican's pouch, or a puffin or a penguin or pemmican or a paladin. . . . It was bright daylight when Kinstrey fell asleep again.

At breakfast, Madge Kinstrey, looking cool and well rested in her white piqué house coat, poured the coffee with steady authority. She raised her eyebrows slightly in mild surprise when Kinstrey mentioned the whip-poor-will the second time (she had not listened the first time, for she was lost in exploring with a long, sensitive finger an infinitesimal chip on the rim of her coffee cup).

"Whip-poor-will?" she said, finally. "No, I didn't hear it. Of course, my room is on the front of the house. You must have been slept out and ready to wake up anyway, or you wouldn't have heard it."

"Ready to wake up?" said Kinstrey. "At four o'clock in the morning? I hadn't slept three hours."

"Well, I didn't hear it," said Mrs. Kinstrey. "I don't listen for night noises; I don't even hear the crickets or the frogs."

"Neither do I," said Kinstrey. "It's not the same thing. This thing is loud as a fire bell. You can hear it for a mile."

"I didn't hear it," she said, buttering a piece of thin toast.

Kinstrey gave it up and turned his scowling attention to the headlines in the *Herald Tribune* of the day before. The vision of his wife sleeping quietly in her canopied four-poster came between his eyes and the ominous headlines. Madge always slept quietly, almost without moving, her arms straight and still outside the covers, her fingers relaxed. She did not believe anyone had to toss and turn. "It's a notion," she would tell Kinstrey. "Don't let your nerves get the best of you. Use your will power."

"Um, hm," said Kinstrey aloud, not meaning to.

"Yes, sir?" said Arthur, the Kinstreys' colored butler, offering Kinstrey a plate of hot blueberry muffins.

"Nothing," said Kinstrey, looking at his wife. "Did you hear the whip-poor-will, Arthur?"

"No, sir, I didn't," said Arthur.

"Did Margaret?"

"I don't think she did, sir," said Arthur. "She didn't say anything about it."

The next morning the whip-poor-will began again at the same hour, rolling out its loops and circles of sound across the new day. Kinstrey, in his dreams, was beset by trios of little bearded men rolling hoops at him. He tried to climb up onto a gigantic Ferris wheel whose swinging seats were rumped beds. The round cop with wheels for feet rolled toward him shouting, "Will power will, will power will, whip-poor-will!"

Kinstrey opened his eyes and stared at the ceiling and began to count the whips. At one point the bird did fifty-three straight, without pausing. I suppose, like the drops of water or the bright light in the third degree, this could

drive you nuts, Kinstrey thought. Or make you confess. He began to think of things he hadn't thought of for years: the time he took the quarter from his mother's pocketbook, the time he steamed open a letter addressed to his father; it was from his teacher in the eighth grade. Miss—let's see—Miss Willpool, Miss Whippoor, Miss Will Power, Miss Wilmott—that was it.

He had reached the indiscretions of his middle twenties when the whip-poor-will suddenly stopped, on "poor," not on "will." Something must have frightened it. Kinstrey sat up on the edge of the bed and lighted a cigarette and listened. The bird was through calling, all right, but Kinstrey couldn't go back to sleep. The day was as bright as a flag. He got up and dressed.

"I thought you weren't going to smoke cigarettes before breakfast any more," said Madge later. "I found four stubs in the ashtray in your bedroom."

It was no use telling her he had smoked them before going to bed; you couldn't fool Madge; she always knew. "That goddam bird woke me up again," he said, "and this time I couldn't get back to sleep." He passed her his empty coffee cup. "It did fifty-three without stopping this morning," he added. "I don't know how the hell it breathes."

His wife took his coffee cup and set it down firmly. "Not three cups," she said. "Not with you sleeping so restlessly the way it is."

"You didn't hear it, I suppose?" he said.

She poured herself some more coffee. "No," she said, "I didn't hear it."

Margaret hadn't heard it, either, but Arthur had. Kinstrey talked to them in the kitchen while they were clearing up after breakfast. Arthur said that it "wuk" him but he went right back to sleep. He said he slept like a log—must be the air off the ocean. As for Margaret, she always slept like a log; only thing ever kept her awake was people a-hoopin' and a-hollerin'. She was glad she didn't hear the whip-poor-will. Down where she came from, she said, if you heard a whip-poor-will singing near the house, it meant there was going to be a death. Arthur said he had heard about that, too; must have been his grandma told him, or somebody.

If a whip-poor-will singing near the house meant death, Kinstrey told them, it wouldn't really make any difference whether you heard it or not. "It doesn't make any difference whether you see the ladder you're walking under," he said, lighting a cigarette and watching the effect of his words on Margaret. She turned from putting some plates away, and her eyes widened and rolled a little.

"Mr. Kinstrey is just teasin' you, Mag," said Arthur, who smiled and was not afraid. Thinks he's pretty smart, Kinstrey thought. Just a little bit too smart, maybe. Kinstrey remembered Arthur's way of smiling, almost imperceptibly, at things Mrs. Kinstrey sometimes said to her husband when Arthur was just coming into the room or just going out—little things that were none of his business to listen to. Like "Not three cups of coffee if a bird keeps you awake." Wasn't that what she had said?

"Is there any more coffee?" he asked, testily. "Or did you throw it out?" He knew they had thrown it out; breakfast had been over for almost an hour.

"We can make you some fresh," said Arthur.

"Never mind," said Kinstrey. "Just don't be so sure of yourself. There's nothing in life to be sure about."

When, later in the morning, he started out the gate to walk down to the post office, Madge called to him from an upstairs window. "Where are you going?" she asked, amiably enough. He frowned up at her. "To the taxidermist's," he said, and went on.

He realized, as he walked along in the warm sunlight, that he had made something of a spectacle of himself. Just because he hadn't had enough sleep—or enough coffee. It wasn't his fault, though. It was that infernal bird. He discovered, after a quarter of a mile, that the imperative rhythm of the whip-poor-will's call was running through his mind, but the words of the song were new: fatal bell, fatal bell, fa-tal bell. Now, where had that popped up from? It took him some time to place it; it was a fragment from "Macbeth." There was something about the fatal bellman crying in the night. "The fatal bellman cried the livelong night"—something like that. It was an owl that cried the night Duncan was murdered. Funny thing to call up after all these years; he hadn't read the play since college. It was that fool Margaret, talking about the whip-poor-will and the old superstition that if you hear the whip-poor-will singing near the house, it means there is going to be a death. Here it was 1942, and people still believed in stuff like that.

The next dawn the dream induced by the calling of the whip-poor-will was longer and more tortured—a nightmare filled with dark perils and heavy hopelessness. Kinstrey woke up trying to cry out. He lay there breathing hard and listening to the bird. He began to count: one, two, three, four, five . . .

Then, suddenly, he leaped out of bed and ran to the window and began yelling and pounding on the windowpane and running the blind up and down. He shouted and cursed until his voice got hoarse. The bird kept right on going. He slammed the window down and turned away from it, and there was Arthur in the doorway.

"What is it, Mr. Kinstrey?" said Arthur. He was fumbling with the end of a faded old bathrobe and trying to blink the sleep out of his eyes. "Is anything the matter?"

Kinstrey glared at him. "Get out of here!" he shouted. "And put some coffee on. Or get me a brandy or something."

"I'll put some coffee on," said Arthur. He went shuffling away in his slippers, still half asleep.

"Well," said Madge Kinstrey over her coffee cup at breakfast, "I hope you got your tantrum over and done with this morning. I never heard such a spectacle—squalling like a spoiled brat."

"You can't hear spectacles," said Kinstrey, coldly. "You see them."

"I'm sure I don't know what you're talking about," she said.

No, you don't, thought Kinstrey, you never have; never have, nev-er have, nev-er have. Would he ever get that damned rhythm out of his head? It struck him that perhaps Madge had no subconscious. When she lay on her back, her eyes closed; when she got up, they opened, like a doll's. The mechanism of

her mind was as simple as a cigarette box; it was either open or it was closed, and there was nothing else, nothing else, nothing else. . . .

The whole problem turns on a very neat point, Kinstrey thought as he lay awake that night, drumming on the headboard with his fingers. William James would have been interested in it; Henry, too, probably. I've got to ignore this thing, get adjusted to it, become oblivious of it. I mustn't fight it, I mustn't build it up. If I get to screaming at it, I'll be running across that wet grass out there in my bare feet, charging that bird as if it were a trench full of Germans, throwing rocks at it, giving the Rebel yell or something, for God's sake. No, I mustn't build it up. I'll think of something else every time it pops into my mind. I'll name the Dodger infield to myself, over and over: Camilli, Herman, Reese, Vaughan, Camilli, Herman, Reese . . .

Kinstrey did not succeed in becoming oblivious of the whip-poor-will. Its dawn call pecked away at his dreams like a vulture at a heart. It slowly carved out a recurring nightmare in which Kinstrey was attacked by an umbrella whose handle, when you clutched it, clutched right back, for the umbrella was not an umbrella at all but a raven. Through the gloomy hallways of his mind rang the Thing's dolorous cry: nevermore, nevermore, nevermore, whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will. . . .

One day, Kinstrey asked Mr. Tetford at the post office if the whip-poor-wills ever went away. Mr. Tetford squinted at him. "Don't look like the sun was brownin' you up none," he said. "I don't know as they ever go away. They move around. I like to hear 'em. You get used to 'em."

"Sure," said Kinstrey. "What do people do when they can't get used to them, though—I mean old ladies or sick people?"

"Only one's been bothered was old Miss Purdy. She darn near set fire to the whole island tryin' to burn 'em out of her woods. Shootin' at 'em might drive 'em off, or a body could trap 'em easy enough and let 'em loose somewhere else. But people get used to 'em after a few mornings."

"Oh, sure," said Kinstrey. "Sure."

That evening in the living room, when Arthur brought in the coffee, Kinstrey's cup cackled idiotically in its saucer when he took it off the tray.

Madge Kinstrey laughed. "Your hand is shaking like a leaf," she said.

He drank all his coffee at once and looked up savagely. "If I could get one good night's sleep, it might help," he said. "That damn bird! I'd like to wring its neck."

"Oh, come, now," she said, mockingly. "You wouldn't hurt a fly. Remember the mouse we caught in the Westport house? You took it out in the field and let it go."

"The trouble with you—" he began, and stopped. He opened the lid of a cigarette box and shut it, opened and shut it again, reflectively. "As simple as that," he said.

She dropped her amused smile and spoke shortly. "You're acting like a child about that silly bird," she said. "Worse than a child. I was over at the Barrys'

this afternoon. Even their little Ann didn't make such a fuss. A whip-poor-will frightened her the first morning, but now she never notices them."

"I'm not frightened, for God's sake!" shouted Kinstrey. "Frightened or brave, asleep or awake, open or shut—you make everything black or white."

"Well," she said, "I like that."

"I think the bird wakes you up, too," he said. "I think it wakes up Arthur and Margaret."

"And we just pretend it doesn't?" she asked. "Why on earth should we?"

"Oh, out of some fool notion of superiority, I suppose. Out of—I don't know."

"I'll thank you not to class me with the servants," she said coldly. He lighted a cigarette and didn't say anything. "You're being ridiculous and childish," she said, "fussing about nothing at all, like an invalid in a wheel chair." She got up and started from the room.

"Nothing at all," he said, watching her go.

She turned at the door. "Ted Barry says he'll take you on at tennis if your bird hasn't worn you down too much." She went on up the stairs, and he heard her close the door of her room.

He sat smoking moodily for a long time, and fell to wondering whether the man's wife in "The Raven" had seen what the man had seen perched on the pallid bust of Pallas just above the chamber door. Probably not, he decided. When he went to bed, he lay awake a long while trying to think of the last line of "The Raven." He couldn't get any farther than "Like a demon that is dreaming," and this kept running through his head. "Nuts," he said at last, aloud, and he had the oddly disturbing feeling that it wasn't he who had spoken but somebody else.

Kinstrey was not surprised that Madge was a little girl in pigtails and a play suit. The long gray hospital room was filled with poor men in will chairs, running their long, sensitive fingers around the rims of empty coffee cups. "Poor Will, poor Will," chanted Madge, pointing her finger at him. "Here are your spectacles, here are your spectacles." One of the sick men was Arthur, grinning at him, grinning at him and holding him with one hand, so that he was powerless to move his arms or legs. "Hurt a fly, hurt a fly," chanted Madge. "Whip him now, whip him now!" she cried, and she was the umpoor in the high chair beside the court, holding a black umbrella over her head: love thirty, love forty, forty-one, forty-two, forty-three, forty-four. His feet were stuck in the wet concrete on his side of the net and Margaret peered over the net at him, holding a skillet for a racquet. Arthur was pushing him down now, and he was caught in the concrete from head to foot. It was Madge laughing and counting over him: refer-three, refer-four, refer-five, refer-will, repoor-will, whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will, whip-poor-will. . . .

The dream still clung to Kinstrey's mind like a cobweb as he stood in the kitchen in his pajamas and bare feet, wondering what he wanted, what he was looking for. He turned on the cold water in the sink and filled a glass, but only took a sip, and put it down. He left the water running. He opened the breadbox and took out half a loaf wrapped in oiled paper, and pulled

open a drawer. He took out the bread knife and then put it back and took out the long, sharp carving knife. He was standing there holding the knife in one hand and the bread in the other when the door to the dining room opened. It was Arthur. "Who do you do first?" Kinstrey said to him, hoarsely. . . .

The Barrys, on their way to the beach in their station wagon, drove into the driveway between the house and the barn. They were surprised to see that, at a quarter to eleven in the morning, the Kinstrey servants hadn't taken in the milk. The bottle, standing on the small back porch, was hot to Barry's touch. When he couldn't rouse anyone, pounding and calling, he climbed up on the cellar door and looked in the kitchen window. He told his wife sharply to get back in the car. . . .

The local police and the state troopers were in and out of the house all day. It wasn't every morning in the year that you got called out on a triple murder and suicide.

It was just getting dark when Troopers Baird and Lennon came out of the front door and walked down to their car, pulled up beside the road in front of the house. Out in back, probably in the little strip of wood there, Lennon figured, a whip-poor-will began to call. Lennon listened a minute. "You ever hear the old people say a whip-poor-will singing near the house means death?" he asked.

Baird grunted and got in under the wheel. Lennon climbed in beside him. "Take more'n a whip-poor-will to cause a mess like that," said Trooper Baird, starting the car.

KATHERINE MANSFIELD *In spite of misfortune, ill-health, and her early death of tuberculosis, Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923) wrote over seventy short stories. Her posthumously published Journal (1927) is the moving account of her brave and difficult life. Her subtle short stories, however, are written with a sure and calm, though delicate, touch and are admirably uniform in their careful finish. Bliss (1920), The Garden Party (1922), and The Dove's Nest (1923) contain many perfect examples of her art.*

MISS BRILL

ALTHOUGH it was so brilliantly fine—the blue sky powdered with gold and great spots of light like white wine splashed over the Jardins Publiques—Miss Brill was glad that she had decided on her fur. The air was motionless, but when you opened your mouth there was just a faint chill, like a chill from a glass of iced water before you sip, and now and again

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a leaf came drifting—from nowhere, from the sky. Miss Brill put up her hand and touched her fur. Dear little thing! It was nice to feel it again. She had taken it out of its box that afternoon, shaken out the moth-powder, given it a good brush, and rubbed the life back into the dim little eyes. "What has been happening to me?" said the sad little eyes. Oh, how sweet it was to see them snap at her again from the red eiderdown! . . . But the nose, which was of some black composition, wasn't at all firm. It must have had a knock, somehow. Never mind—a little dab of black sealing-wax when the time came—when it was absolutely necessary. . . . Little rogue! Yes, she really felt like that about it. Little rogue biting its tail just by her left ear. She could have taken it off and laid it on her lap and stroked it. She felt a tingling in her hands and arms, but that came from walking, she supposed. And when she breathed, something light and sad—no, not sad, exactly—something gentle seemed to move in her bosom.

There were a number of people out this afternoon, far more than last Sunday. And the band sounded louder and gayer. That was because the Season had begun. For although the band played all the year round on Sundays, out of season it was never the same. It was like someone playing with only the family to listen; it didn't care how it played if there weren't any strangers present. Wasn't the conductor wearing a new coat, too? She was sure it was new. He scraped with his foot and flapped his arms like a rooster about to crow, and the bandsmen sitting in the green rotunda blew out their cheeks and glared at the music. Now there came a little "flutey" bit—very pretty!—a little chain of bright drops. She was sure it would be repeated. It was; she lifted her head and smiled.

Only two people shared her "special" seat: a fine old man in a velvet coat, his hands clasped over a huge carved walking-stick, and a big old woman, sitting upright, with a roll of knitting on her embroidered apron. They did not speak. This was disappointing, for Miss Brill always looked forward to the conversation. She had become really quite expert, she thought, at listening as though she didn't listen, at sitting in other people's lives just for a minute while they talked round her.

She glanced, sideways, at the old couple. Perhaps they would go soon. Last Sunday, too, hadn't been as interesting as usual. An Englishman and his wife, he wearing a dreadful Panama hat and she button boots. And she'd gone on the whole time about how she ought to wear spectacles; she knew she needed them; but that it was no good getting any; they'd be sure to break and they'd never keep on. And he'd been so patient. He'd suggested everything—gold rims, the kind that curved round your ears, little pads inside the bridge. No, nothing would please her. "They'll always be sliding down my nose!" Miss Brill had wanted to shake her.

The old people sat on the bench, still as statues. Never mind, there was always the crowd to watch. To and fro, in front of the flower-beds and the band rotunda, the couples and groups paraded, stopped to talk, to greet, to buy a handful of flowers from the old beggar who had his tray fixed to the railings. Little children ran among them, swooping and laughing; little boys

with big white silk bows under their chins, little girls, little French dolls, dressed up in velvet and lace. And sometimes a tiny staggerer came suddenly rocking into the open from under the trees, stopped, stared, as suddenly sat down "flop," until its small high-stepping mother, like a young hen, rushed scolding to its rescue. Other people sat on the benches and green chairs, but they were nearly always the same, Sunday after Sunday, and—Miss Brill had often noticed—there was something funny about nearly all of them. They were odd, silent, nearly all old, and from the way they stared they looked as though they'd just come from dark little rooms or even—even cupboards!

Behind the rotunda the slender trees with yellow leaves down drooping, and through them just a line of sea, and beyond the blue sky with gold-veined clouds.

Tum-tum-tum tiddle-um! tiddle-um! tum tiddley-um tum ta! blew the band.

Two young girls in red came by and two young soldiers in blue met them, and they laughed and paired and went off arm-in-arm. Two peasant women with funny straw hats passed, gravely, leading beautiful smoke-coloured donkeys. A cold, pale nun hurried by. A beautiful woman came along and dropped her bunch of violets, and a little boy ran after to hand them to her, and she took them and threw them away as if they'd been poisoned. Dear me! Miss Brill didn't know whether to admire that or not! And now an ermine toque and a gentleman in grey met just in front of her. He was tall, stiff, dignified, and she was wearing the ermine toque she'd bought when her hair was yellow. Now everything, her hair, her face, even her eyes, was the same colour as the shabby ermine, and her hand, in its cleaned glove, lifted to dab her lips, was a tiny yellowish paw. Oh, she was so pleased to see him—delighted! She rather thought they were going to meet that afternoon. She described where she'd been—everywhere, here, there, along by the sea. The day was so charming—didn't he agree? And wouldn't he, perhaps? . . . But he shook his head, lighted a cigarette, slowly breathed a great deep puff into her face, and, even while she was still talking and laughing, flicked the match away and walked on. The ermine toque was alone; she smiled more brightly than ever. But even the band seemed to know what she was feeling and played more softly, played tenderly, and the drum beat, "The Brute! The Brute!" over and over. What would she do? What was going to happen now? But as Miss Brill wondered, the ermine toque turned, raised her hand as though she'd seen someone else, much nicer, just over there, and pattered away. And the band changed again and played more quickly, more gaily than ever, and the old couple on Miss Brill's seat got up and marched away, and such a funny old man with long whiskers hobbled along in time to the music and was nearly knocked over by four girls walking abreast.

Oh, how fascinating it was! How she enjoyed it! How she loved sitting here, watching it all! It was like a play. It was exactly like a play. Who could believe the sky at the back wasn't painted? But it wasn't till a little brown dog trotted on solemn and then slowly trotted off, like a little "theatre" dog, a little dog that had been drugged, that Miss Brill discovered what it was that made it so exciting. They were all on the stage. They weren't only the

audience, not only looking on; they were acting. Even she had a part and came every Sunday. No doubt somebody would have noticed if she hadn't been there; she was part of the performance after all. How strange she'd never thought of it like that before! And yet it explained why she made such a point of starting from home at just the same time each week—so as not to be late for the performance—and it also explained why she had quite a queer, shy feeling at telling her English pupils how she spent her Sunday afternoons. No wonder! Miss Brill nearly laughed out loud. She was on the stage. She thought of the old invalid gentleman to whom she read the newspaper four afternoons a week while he slept in the garden. She had got quite used to the frail head on the cotton pillow, the hollowed eyes, the open mouth and the high pinched nose. If he'd been dead she mightn't have noticed for weeks; she wouldn't have minded. But suddenly he knew he was having the paper read to him by an actress! "An actress!" The old head lifted; two points of light quivered in the old eyes. "An actress—are ye?" And Miss Brill smoothed the newspaper as though it were the manuscript of her part and said gently: "Yes, I have been an actress for a long time."

The band had been having a rest. Now they started again. And what they played was warm, sunny, yet there was just a faint chill—a something, what was it?—not sadness—no, not sadness—a something that made you want to sing. The tune lifted, lifted, the light shone; and it seemed to Miss Brill that in another moment all of them, all the whole company, would begin singing. The young ones, the laughing ones who were moving together, they would begin, and the men's voices, very resolute and brave, would join them. And then she too, she too, and the others on the benches—they would come in with a kind of accompaniment—something low, that scarcely rose or fell, something so beautiful—moving. . . . And Miss Brill's eyes filled with tears and she looked smiling at all the other members of the company. Yes, we understand, we understand, she thought—though what they understood she didn't know.

Just at that moment a boy and a girl came and sat down where the old couple had been. They were beautifully dressed; they were in love. The hero and heroine, of course, just arrived from his father's yacht. And still soundlessly singing, still with that trembling smile, Miss Brill prepared to listen.

"No, not now," said the girl. "Not here, I can't."

"But why? Because of that stupid old thing at the end there?" asked the boy. "Why does she come here at all—who wants her? Why doesn't she keep her silly old mug at home?"

"It's her fu-fur which is so funny," giggled the girl. "It's exactly like a fried whiting."

"Ah, be off with you!" said the boy in an angry whisper. Then: "Tell me, *ma petite chère*—"

"No, not here," said the girl. "Not *yet*."

On her way home she usually bought a slice of honey-cake at the baker's. It was her Sunday treat. Sometimes there was an almond in her slice, some-

times not. It made a great difference. If there was an almond it was like carrying home a tiny present—a surprise—something that might very well not have been there. She hurried on the almond Sundays and struck the match for the kettle in quite a dashing way.

But today she passed the baker's by, climbed the stairs, went into the little dark room—her room like a cupboard—and sat down on the red eiderdown. She sat there for a long time. The box that the fur came out of was on the bed. She unclasped the necklet quickly; quickly, without looking, laid it inside. But when she put the lid on she thought she heard something crying.

ALDOUS HUXLEY *Grandson of Thomas Huxley, the great Victorian popularizer of science, and grand-nephew of Matthew Arnold, Victorian poet and literary and social critic, Aldous Huxley (b. 1894) has followed the family traditions. Although also a poet and essayist, he has been most widely read for his brilliantly satiric novels and short stories which reveal the supposed decadence of society between the two World Wars. Among his novels are Antic Hay (1923), Point Counter Point (1928), and A Brave New World (1932). Mortal Coils (1922), The Little Mexican and Other Stories (1924), and Brief Candles (1930) are collections of short stories.*

THE TILLOTSON BANQUET

YOUNG Spode was not a snob; he was too intelligent for that, too fundamentally decent. Not a snob; but all the same he could not help feeling very well pleased at the thought that he was dining, alone and intimately, with Lord Badgery. It was a definite event in his life, a step forward, he felt, towards that final success, social, material, and literary, which he had come to London with the fixed intention of making. The conquest and capture of Badgery was an almost essential strategical move in the campaign.

Edmund, forty-seventh Baron Badgery, was a lineal descendant of that Edmund, surnamed Le Blayreau, who landed on English soil in the train of William the Conqueror. Ennobled by William Rufus, the Badgerys had been one of the very few baronial families to survive the Wars of the Roses and all the other changes and chances of English history. They were a sensible and philoprogenitive race. No Badgery had ever fought in any war, no Badgery had ever engaged in any kind of politics. They had been content to live and quietly to propagate their species in a huge machicolated Norman castle, surrounded by a triple moat, only sallying forth to cultivate their property and to

"The Tillotson Banquet," from *Mortal Coils* by Aldous Huxley. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Harper & Brothers.

collect their rents. In the eighteenth century, when life had become relatively secure, the Badgerys began to venture forth into civilised society. From boorish squires they blossomed into *grands seigneurs*, patrons of the arts, virtuosi. Their property was large, they were rich; and with the growth of industrialism their riches also grew. Villages on their estate turned into manufacturing towns, unsuspected coal was discovered beneath the surface of their barren moorlands. By the middle of the nineteenth century the Badgerys were among the richest of English noble families. The forty-seventh baron disposed of an income of at least two hundred thousand pounds a year. Following the great Badgery tradition, he had refused to have anything to do with politics or war. He occupied himself by collecting pictures; he took an interest in theatrical productions; he was the friend and patron of men of letters, of painters, and musicians. A personage, in a word, of considerable consequence in that particular world in which young Spode had elected to make his success.

Spode had only recently left the university. Simon Gollamy, the editor of the *World's Review* (the "Best of all possible Worlds"), had got to know him—he was always on the lookout for youthful talent—had seen possibilities in the young man, and appointed him art critic of his paper. Gollamy liked to have young and teachable people about him. The possession of disciples flattered his vanity, and he found it easier, moreover, to run his paper with docile collaborators than with men grown obstinate and case-hardened with age. Spode had not done badly at his new job. At any rate, his articles had been intelligent enough to arouse the interest of Lord Badgery. It was, ultimately, to them that he owed the honour of sitting tonight in the dining-room of Badgery House.

Fortified by several varieties of wine and a glass of aged brandy, Spode felt more confident and at ease than he had done the whole evening. Badgery was rather a disquieting host. He had an alarming habit of changing the subject of any conversation that had lasted for more than two minutes. Spode had found it, for example, horribly mortifying when his host, cutting across what was, he prided himself, a particularly subtle and illuminating disquisition on baroque art, had turned a wandering eye about the room and asked him abruptly whether he liked parrots. He had flushed and glanced suspiciously towards him, fancying that the man was trying to be offensive. But no; Badgery's white, fleshy, Hanoverian face wore an expression of perfect good faith. There was no malice in his small greenish eyes. He evidently did genuinely want to know if Spode liked parrots. The young man swallowed his irritation and replied that he did. Badgery then told a good story about parrots. Spode was on the point of capping it with a better story, when his host began to talk about Beethoven. And so the game went on. Spode cut his conversation to suit his host's requirements. In the course of ten minutes he had made a more or less witty epigram on Benvenuto Cellini, Queen Victoria, sport, God, Stephen Phillips, and Moorish architecture. Lord Badgery thought him the most charming young man, and so intelligent.

"If you've quite finished your coffee," he said, rising to his feet as he spoke, "we'll go and look at the pictures."

Spode jumped up with alacrity, and only then realised that he had drunk just ever so little too much. He would have to be careful, talk deliberately, plant his feet consciously, one after the other.

"This house is quite cluttered up with pictures," Lord Badgery complained. "I had a whole wagon-load taken away to the country last week; but there are still far too many. My ancestors would have their portraits painted by Romney. Such a shocking artist, don't you think? Why couldn't they have chosen Gainsborough, or even Reynolds? I've had all the Romneys hung in the servants' hall now. It's such a comfort to know that one can never possibly see them again. I suppose you know all about the ancient Hittites?"

"Well . . ." the young man replied, with befitting modesty.

"Look at that, then." He indicated a large stone head which stood in a case near the dining-room door. "It's not Greek, or Egyptian, or Persian, or anything else; so if it isn't ancient Hittite, I don't know what it is. And that reminds me of that story about Lord George Sanger, the Circus King . . ." and, without giving Spode time to examine the Hittite relic, he led the way up the huge staircase, pausing every now and then in his anecdote to point out some new object of curiosity or beauty.

"I suppose you know Deburau's pantomimes?" Spode rapped out as soon as the story was over. He was in an itch to let out his information about Deburau. Badgery had given him a perfect opening with his ridiculous Sanger. "What a perfect man, isn't he? He used to . . ."

"This is my main gallery," said Lord Badgery, throwing open one leaf of a tall folding door. "I must apologise for it. It looks like a roller-skating rink." He fumbled with the electric switches and there was suddenly light—light that revealed an enormous gallery, duly receding into distance according to all the laws of perspective. "I dare say you've heard of my poor father," Lord Badgery continued. "A little insane, you know; sort of mechanical genius with a screw loose. He used to have a toy railway in this room. No end of fun he had, crawling about the floor after his trains. And all the pictures were stacked in the cellars. I can't tell you what they were like when I found them: mushrooms growing out of the Botticellis. Now I'm rather proud of this Poussin; he painted it for Scarron."

"Exquisite!" Spoke exclaimed, making with his hand a gesture as though he were modelling a pure form in the air. "How splendid the onrush of those trees and leaning figures is! And the way they're caught up, as it were, and stemmed by that single godlike form opposing them with his contrary movement! And the draperies . . ."

But Lord Badgery had moved on, and was standing in front of a little fifteenth-century Virgin of carved wood.

"School of Rheims," he explained.

They "did" the gallery at high speed. Badgery never permitted his guest to halt for more than forty seconds before any work of art. Spode would have liked to spend a few moments of recollection and tranquillity in front of some of these lovely things. But it was not permitted.

The gallery done, they passed into a little room leading out of it. At the sight of what the lights revealed, Spode gasped.

"It's like something out of Balzac," he exclaimed. "Un de ces salons dorés où se déploie un luxe insolent. You know."

"My nineteenth-century chamber," Badgery explained. "The best thing of its kind, I flatter myself, outside the State Apartments at Windsor."

Spode tiptoed round the room, peering with astonishment at all the objects in glass, in gilded bronze, in china, in feathers, in embroidered and painted silk, in beads, in wax, objects of the most fantastic shapes and colours, all the queer products of a decadent tradition, with which the room was crowded. There were paintings on the walls—a Martin, a Wilkie, an early Landseer, several Ettys, a big Haydon, a slight pretty water-colour of a girl by Wainwright, the pupil of Blake and arsenic poisoner, a score of others. But the picture which arrested Spode's attention was a medium sized canvas representing Troilus riding into Troy among the flowers and plaudits of an admiring crowd, and oblivious (you could see from his expression) of everything but the eyes of Cressida, who looked down at him from a window, with Pandarus smiling over her shoulder.

"What an absurd and enchanting picture!" Spode exclaimed.

"Ah, you've spotted my Troilus." Lord Badgery was pleased.

"What bright harmonious colours! Like Etty's, only stronger, not so obviously pretty. And there's an energy about it that reminds one of Haydon. Only Haydon could never have done anything so impeccable in taste. Who is it by?" Spode turned to his host inquiringly.

"You were right in detecting Haydon," Lord Badgery answered. "It's by his pupil, Tillotson. I wish I could get hold of more of his work. But nobody seems to know anything about him. And he seems to have done so little."

This time it was the younger man who interrupted.

"Tillotson, Tillotson . . ." He put his hand to his forehead. A frown incongruously distorted his round, floridly curved face. "No . . . yes, I have it." He looked up triumphantly with serene and childish brows. "Tillotson, Walter Tillotson—the man's still alive."

Badgery smiled. "This picture was painted in 1846, you know."

"Well, that's all right. Say he was born in 1820, painted his masterpiece when he was twenty-six, and it's 1913 now; that's to say he's only ninety-three. Not as old as Titian yet."

"But he's not been heard of since 1860," Lord Badgery protested.

"Precisely. Your mention of his name reminded me of the discovery I made the other day when I was looking through the obituary notices in the archives of the *World's Review*. (One has to bring them up to date every year or so for fear of being caught napping if one of these old birds chooses to shuffle off suddenly.) Well, there, among them—I remember my astonishment at the time—there I found Walter Tillotson's biography. Pretty full to 1860, and then a blank, except for a pencil note in the early nineteen hundreds to the effect that he had returned from the East. The obituary has never been used

or added to. I draw the obvious conclusion: the old chap isn't dead yet. He's just been overlooked somehow."

"But this is extraordinary," Lord Badgery exclaimed. "You must find him, Spode—you must find him. I'll commission him to paint frescoes round this room. It's just what I've always vainly longed for—a real nineteenth-century artist to decorate this place for me. Oh, we must find him at once—at once."

Lord Badgery strode up and down in a state of great excitement.

"I can see how this room could be made quite perfect," he went on. "We'd clear away all these cases and have the whole of that wall filled by a heroic fresco of Hector and Andromache, or 'Distraint for Rent,' or Fanny Kemble as Belvidera in 'Venice Preserved'—anything like that, provided it's in the grand manner of the 'thirties and 'forties. And here I'd have a landscape with lovely receding perspectives, or else something architectural and grand in the style of Belshazzar's feast. Then we'll have this Adam fireplace taken down and replaced by something Mauro-Gothic. And on these walls I'll have mirrors, or no! let me see . . ."

He sank into meditative silence, from which he finally roused himself to shout:

"The old man, the old man! Spode, we must find this astonishing old creature. And don't breathe a word to anybody. Tillotson shall be our secret. Oh, it's too perfect, it's incredible! Think of the frescoes."

Lord Badgery's face had become positively animated. He had talked of a single subject for nearly a quarter of an hour.

2

Three weeks later Lord Badgery was aroused from his usual after-luncheon somnolence by the arrival of a telegram. The message was a short one. "Found.—SPODE." A look of pleasure and intelligence made human Lord Badgery's clayey face of surfeit. "No answer," he said. The footman padded away on noiseless feet.

Lord Badgery closed his eyes and began to contemplate. Found! What a room he would have! There would be nothing like it in the world. The frescoes, the fireplace, the mirrors, the ceiling. . . . And a small, shrivelled old man clambering about the scaffolding, agile and quick like one of those whiskered little monkeys at the Zoo, painting away, painting away. . . . Fanny Kemble as Belvidera, Hector and Andromache, or why not the Duke of Clarence in the Butt, the Duke of Malmsey, the Butt of Clarence. . . . Lord Badgery was asleep.

Spode did not lag long behind his telegram. He was at Badgery House by six o'clock. His lordship was in the nineteenth-century chamber, engaged in clearing away with his own hands the bric-à-brac. Spode found him looking hot and out of breath.

"Ah, there you are," said Lord Badgery. "You see me already preparing for the great man's coming. Now you must tell me all about him."

"He's older even than I thought," said Spode. "He's ninety-seven this year."

Born in 1816. Incredible, isn't it! There, I'm beginning at the wrong end."

"Begin where you like," said Badgery genially.

"I won't tell you all the incidents of the hunt. You've no idea what a job I had to run him to earth. It was like a Sherlock Holmes story, immensely elaborate, too elaborate. I shall write a book about it some day. At any rate, I found him at last."

"Where?"

"In a sort of respectable slum in Holloway, older and poorer and lonelier than you could have believed possible. I found out how it was he came to be forgotten, how he came to drop out of life in the way he did. He took it into his head, somewhere about the 'sixties, to go to Palestine to get local colour for his religious pictures—scapegoats and things, you know. Well, he went to Jerusalem and then on to Mount Lebanon and on and on, and then, somewhere in the middle of Asia Minor, he got stuck. He got stuck for about forty years."

"But what did he do all that time?"

"Oh, he painted, and started a mission, and converted three Turks, and taught the local Pashas the rudiments of English, Latin, and perspective, and God knows what else. Then, in about 1904, it seems to have occurred to him that he was getting rather old and had been away from home for rather a long time. So he made his way back to England, only to find that everyone he had known was dead, that the dealers had never heard of him and wouldn't buy his pictures, that he was simply a ridiculous old figure of fun. So he got a job as a drawing-master in a girls' school in Holloway, and there he's been ever since, growing older and older, and feebler and feebler, and blinder and deafer, and generally more gaga, until finally the school has given him the sack. He had about ten pounds in the world when I found him. He lives in a kind of black hole in a basement full of beetles. When his ten pounds are spent, I suppose he'll just quietly die there."

Badgery held up a white hand. "No more, no more. I find literature quite depressing enough. I insist that life at least shall be a little gayer. Did you tell him I wanted him to paint my room?"

"But he can't paint. He's too blind and palsied."

"Can't paint?" Badgery exclaimed in horror. "Then what's the good of the old creature?"

"Well, if you put it like that . . ." Spode began.

"I shall never have my frescoes. Ring the bell, will you?"

Spode rang.

"What right has Tillotson to go on existing if he can't paint?" went on Lord Badgery petulantly. "After all, that was his only justification for occupying a place in the sun."

"He doesn't have much sun in his basement."

The footman appeared at the door.

"Get someone to put all these things back in their places," Lord Badgery commanded, indicating with a wave of the hand the ravaged cases, the con

fusion of glass and china with which he had littered the floor, the pictures unhooked. "We'll go to the library, Spode; it's more comfortable there."

He led the way through the long gallery and down the stairs.

"I'm sorry old Tillotson has been such a disappointment," said Spode sympathetically.

"Let us talk about something else; he ceases to interest me."

"But don't you think we ought to do something about him? He's only got ten pounds between him and the workhouse. And if you'd seen the black-beetles in his basement!"

"Enough—enough. I'll do everything you think fitting."

"I thought we might get up a subscription amongst lovers of the arts."

"There aren't any," said Badgery.

"No; but there are plenty of people who will subscribe out of snobbism."

"Not unless you give them something for their money."

"That's true. I hadn't thought of that." Spode was silent for a moment. "We might have a dinner in his honour. The Great Tillotson Banquet. Doyen of the British Art. A Link with the Past. Can't you see it in the papers? I'd make a stunt of it in the *World's Review*. That ought to bring in the snobs."

"And we'll invite a lot of artists and critics—all the ones who can't stand one another. It will be fun to see them squabbling." Badgery laughed. Then his face darkened once again. "Still," he added, "it'll be a very poor second best to my frescoes. You'll stay to dinner, of course."

"Well, since you suggest it. Thanks very much."

3

The Tillotson Banquet was fixed to take place about three weeks later. Spode, who had charge of the arrangements, proved himself an excellent organiser. He secured the big banqueting-room at the Café Bomba, and was successful in bullying and cajoling the manager into giving fifty persons dinner at twelve shillings a head, including wine. He sent out invitations and collected subscriptions. He wrote an article on Tillotson in the *World's Review*—one of those charming, witty articles couched in the tone of amused patronage and contempt with which one speaks of the great men of 1840. Nor did he neglect Tillotson himself. He used to go to Holloway almost every day to listen to the old man's endless stories about Asia Minor and the Great Exhibition of '51 and Benjamin Robert Haydon. He was sincerely sorry for this relic of another age.

Mr. Tillotson's room was about ten feet below the level of the soil of South Holloway. A little grey light percolated through the area bars, forced a difficult passage through panes opaque with dirt, and spent itself, like a drop of milk that falls into an inkpot, among the inveterate shadows of the dungeon. The place was haunted by the sour smell of damp plaster and of woodwork that has begun to moulder secretly at the heart. A little miscellaneous furniture, including a bed, a washstand and chest of drawers, a table and one or

two chairs, lurked in the obscure corners of the den or ventured furtively out into the open. Hither Spode now came almost every day, bringing the old man news of the progress of the banquet scheme. Every day he found Mr. Tillotson sitting in the same place under the window, bathing, as it were, in his tiny puddle of light. "The oldest man that ever wore grey hairs," Spode reflected as he looked at him. Only there were very few hairs left on that bald, unpolished head. At the sound of the visitor's knock Mr. Tillotson would turn in his chair, stare in the direction of the door with blinking, uncertain eyes. He was always full of apologies for being so slow in recognising who was there.

"No discourtesy meant," he would say, after asking. "It's not as if I had forgotten who you were. Only it's so dark and my sight isn't what it was."

After that he never failed to give a little laugh, and, pointing out of the window at the area railings, would say:

"Ah, this is the place for somebody with good sight. It's the place for looking at ankles. It's the grand stand."

It was the day before the great event. Spode came as usual, and Mr. Tillotson punctually made his little joke about the ankles, and Spode, as punctually, laughed.

"Well, Mr. Tillotson," he said, after the reverberation of the joke had died away, "tomorrow you make your re-entry into the world of art and fashion. You'll find some changes."

"I've always had such extraordinary luck," said Mr. Tillotson, and Spode could see by his expression that he genuinely believed it, that he had forgotten the black hole and the blackbeetles and the almost exhausted ten pounds that stood between him and the workhouse. "What an amazing piece of good fortune, for instance, that you should have found me just when you did. Now, this dinner will bring me back to my place in the world. I shall have money, and in a little while—who knows?—I shall be able to see well enough to paint again. I believe my eyes are getting better, you know. Ah, the future is very rosy."

Mr. Tillotson looked up, his face puckered into a smile, and nodded his head in affirmation of his words.

"You believe in the life to come?" said Spode, and immediately flushed for shame at the cruelty of the words.

But Mr. Tillotson was in far too cheerful a mood to have caught their significance.

"Life to come," he repeated. "No, I don't believe in any of that stuff—not since 1859. The 'Origin of Species' changed my views, you know. No life to come for me, thank you! You don't remember the excitement of course. You're very young, Mr. Spode."

"Well, I'm not so old as I was," Spode replied. "You know how middle-aged one is as a schoolboy and undergraduate. Now I'm old enough to know I'm young."

Spode was about to develop this little paradox further, but he noticed that

Mr. Tillotson had not been listening. He made a note of the gambit for use in companies that were more appreciative of the subtleties.

"You were talking about the 'Origin of Species,'" he said.

"Was I?" said Mr. Tillotson, waking from reverie.

"About its effect on your faith, Mr. Tillotson."

"To be sure, yes. It shattered my faith. But I remember a fine thing by the Poet Laureate, something about there being more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in all the . . . all the . . . I forget exactly what; but you see the train of thought. Oh, it was a bad time for religion. I am glad my master Haydon never lived to see it. He was a man of fervour. I remember him pacing up and down his studio in Lisson Grove, singing and shouting and praying all at once. It used almost to frighten me. Oh, but he was a wonderful man, a great man. Take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again. As usual, the Bard is right. But it was all very long ago, before your time, Mr. Spode."

"Well, I'm not as old as I was," said Spode, in the hope of having his paradox appreciated this time. But Mr. Tillotson went on without noticing the interruption.

"It's a very, very long time. And yet, when I look back on it, it all seems but a day or two ago. Strange that each day should seem so long and that many days added together should be less than an hour. How clearly I can see old Haydon pacing up and down! Much more clearly, indeed, than I see you, Mr. Spode. The eyes of memory don't grow dim. But my sight is improving, I assure you; it's improving daily. I shall soon be able to see those ankles." He laughed, like a cracked bell—one of those little old bells, Spode fancied, that ring, with much rattling of wires, in the far-off servants' quarters of ancient houses. "And very soon," Mr. Tillotson went on, "I shall be painting again. Ah, Mr. Spode, my luck is extraordinary. I believe in it, I trust in it. And after all, what is luck? Simply another name for Providence, in spite of the 'Origin of Species' and the rest of it. How right the Laureate was when he said that there was more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in all the . . . er, the . . . er . . . well, you know. I regard you, Mr. Spode, as the emissary of Providence. Your coming marked a turning-point in my life, and the beginning, for me, of happier days. Do you know, one of the first things I shall do when my fortunes are restored will be to buy a hedgehog."

"A hedgehog, Mr. Tillotson?"

"For the blackbeetles. There's nothing like a hedgehog for beetles. It will eat blackbeetles till it's sick, till it dies of surfeit. That reminds me of the time when I told my poor great master Haydon—in joke, of course—that he ought to send in a cartoon of King John dying of a surfeit of lampreys for the frescoes in the new Houses of Parliament. As I told him, it's a most notable event in the annals of British liberty—the providential and exemplary removal of a tyrant."

Mr. Tillotson laughed again—the little bell in the deserted house; a ghostly hand pulling the cord in the drawing-room, and phantom footmen responding to the thin, flawed note.

"I remember he laughed, laughed like a bull in his old grand manner. But oh, it was a terrible blow when they rejected his design, a terrible blow! It was the first and fundamental cause of his suicide."

Mr. Tillotson paused. There was a long silence. Spode felt strangely moved, he hardly knew why, in the presence of this man, so frail, so ancient, in body three parts dead, in the spirit so full of life and hopeful patience. He felt ashamed. What was the use of his own youth and cleverness? He saw himself suddenly as a boy with a rattle scaring birds—rattling his noisy cleverness, waving his arms in ceaseless and futile activity, never resting in his efforts to scare away the birds that were always trying to settle in his mind. And what birds! wide-winged and beautiful, all those serene thoughts and faiths and emotions that only visit minds that have humbled themselves to quiet. Those gracious visitants he was for ever using all his energies to drive away. But this old man, with his hedgehogs and his honest doubts and all the rest of it—his mind was like a field made beautiful by the free coming and going, the unafraid alightings of a multitude of white, bright-winged creatures. He felt ashamed. But then, was it possible to alter one's life? Wasn't it a little absurd to risk a conversion? Spode shrugged his shoulders.

"I'll get you a hedgehog at once," he said. "They're sure to have some at Whiteley's."

Before he left that evening Spode made an alarming discovery. Mr. Tillotson did not possess a dress-suit. It was hopeless to think of getting one made at this short notice, and, besides, what an unnecessary expense!

"We shall have to borrow a suit, Mr. Tillotson. I ought to have thought of that before."

"Dear me, dear me." Mr. Tillotson was a little chagrined by this unlucky discovery. "Borrow a suit?"

Spode hurried away for counsel to Badgery House. Lord Badgery surprisingly rose to the occasion. "Ask Boreham to come and see me," he told the footman who answered his ring.

Boreham was one of those immemorial butlers who linger on, generation after generation, in the houses of the great. He was over eighty now, bent, dried up, shrivelled with age.

"All old men are about the same size," said Lord Badgery. It was a comforting theory. "Ah, here he is. Have you got a spare suit of evening clothes, Boreham?"

"I have an old suit, my lord, that I stopped wearing in—let me see—was it nineteen seven or eight?"

"That's the very thing. I should be most grateful, Boreham, if you could lend it to me for Mr. Spode here for a day."

The old man went out, and soon reappeared carrying over his arm a very old black suit. He held up the coat and trousers for inspection. In the light of day they were deplorable.

"You've no idea, sir," said Boreham deprecatingly to Spode—"you've no idea how easy things get stained with grease and gravy and what not. However careful you are, sir—however careful."

"I should imagine so." Spode was sympathetic.

"However careful, sir."

"But in artificial light they'll look all right."

"Perfectly all right," Lord Badgery repeated. "Thank you, Boreham; you shall have them back on Thursday."

"You're welcome, my lord, I'm sure." And the old man bowed and disappeared.

On the afternoon of the great day Spode carried up to Holloway a parcel containing Boreham's retired evening-suit and all the necessary appurtenances in the way of shirts and collars. Owing to the darkness and his own feeble sight Mr. Tillotson was happily unaware of the defects in the suit. He was in a state of extreme nervous agitation. It was with some difficulty that Spode could prevent him, although it was only three o'clock, from starting his toilet on the spot.

"Take it easy, Mr. Tillotson, take it easy. We needn't start till half-past seven, you know."

Spode left an hour later, and as soon as he was safely out of the room Mr. Tillotson began to prepare himself for the banquet. He lighted the gas and a couple of candles, and, blinking myopically at the image that fronted him in the tiny looking-glass that stood on his chest of drawers, he set to work, with all the ardour of a young girl preparing for her first ball. At six o'clock, when the last touches had been given, he was not unsatisfied.

He marched up and down his cellar, humming to himself the gay song which had been so popular in his middle years:

Oh, oh, Anna Maria Jones!

Queen of the tambourine, the cymbals, and the bones!

Spode arrived an hour later in Lord Badgery's second Rolls-Royce. Opening the door of the old man's dungeon, he stood for a moment, wide-eyed with astonishment, on the threshold. Mr. Tillotson was standing by the empty grate, one elbow resting on the mantelpiece, one leg crossed over the other in a jaunty and gentlemanly attitude. The effect of the candlelight shining on his face was to deepen every line and wrinkle with intense black shadow; he looked immeasurably old. It was a noble and pathetic head. On the other hand, Boreham's outworn evening-suit was simply buffoonish. The coat was too long in the sleeves and the tail; the trousers bagged in elephantine creases about his ankles. Some of the grease-spots were visible even in candlelight. The white tie, over which Mr. Tillotson had taken infinite pains and which he believed in his purblindness to be perfect, was fantastically lop-sided. He had buttoned up his waistcoat in such a fashion that one button was widowed of its hole and one hole of its button. Across his shirt front lay the broad green ribbon of some unknown Order.

"Queen of the tambourine, the cymbals, and the bones," Mr. Tillotson concluded in a gnat-like voice before welcoming his visitor.

"Well, Spode, here you are. I'm dressed already, you see. The suit, I flatter

myself, fits very well, almost as though it had been made for me. I am all gratitude to the gentleman who was kind enough to lend it to me; I shall take the greatest care of it. It's a dangerous thing to lend clothes. For loan oft loseth both itself and friend. The Bard is always right."

"Just one thing," said Spode. "A touch to your waistcoat." He unbuttoned the dissipated garment and did it up again more symmetrically.

Mr. Tillotson was a little piqued at being found so absurdly in the wrong.

"Thanks, thanks," he said, protestingly, trying to edge away from his valet. "It's all right, you know; I can do it myself. Foolish oversight. I flatter myself the suit fits very well."

"And perhaps the tie might . . ." Spode began tentatively. But the old man would not hear of it.

"No, no. The tie's all right. I can tie a tie, Mr. Spode. The tie's all right. Leave it as it is, I beg."

"I like your Order."

Mr. Tillotson looked down complacently at his shirt front. "Ah, you've noticed my Order. It's a long time since I wore that. It was given me by the Grand Porte, you know, for services rendered in the Russo-Turkish War. It's the Order of Chastity, the second class. They only give the first class to crowned heads, you know—crowned heads and ambassadors. And only Pashas of the highest rank get the second. Mine's the second. They only give the first class to crowned heads . . ."

"Of course, of course," said Spode.

"Do you think I look all right, Mr. Spode?" Mr. Tillotson asked, a little anxiously.

"Splendid, Mr. Tillotson—splendid. The Order's magnificent."

The old man's face brightened once more. "I flatter myself," he said, "that this borrowed suit fits me very well. But I don't like borrowing clothes. For loan oft loseth both itself and friend, you know. And the Bard is always right."

"Ugh, there's one of those horrible beetles!" Spode exclaimed.

Mr. Tillotson bent down and stared at the floor. "I see it," he said, and stamped on a small piece of coal, which crunched to powder under his foot. "I shall certainly buy a hedgehog."

It was time for them to start. A crowd of little boys and girls had collected round Lord Badgery's enormous car. The chauffeur, who felt that honour and dignity were at stake, pretended not to notice the children, but sat gazing, like a statue, into eternity. At the sight of Spode and Mr. Tillotson emerging from the house a yell of mingled awe and derision went up. It subsided to an astonished silence as they climbed into the car. "Bomba's," Spode directed. The Rolls-Royce gave a faintly stertorous sigh and began to move. The children yelled again, and ran along beside the car, waving their arms in a frenzy of excitement. It was then that Mr. Tillotson, with an incomparably noble gesture, leaned forward and tossed among the seething crowd of urchins his three last coppers.

4

In Bomba's big room the company was assembling. The long gilt-edged mirrors reflected a singular collection of people. Middle-aged Academicians shot suspicious glances at youths whom they suspected, only too correctly, of being iconoclasts, organisers of Post-Impressionist Exhibitions. Rival art critics, brought suddenly face to face, quivered with restrained hatred. Mrs. Nobes, Mrs. Cayman, and Mrs. Mandragore, those indefatigable hunters of artistic big game, came on one another all unawares in this well-stored menagerie, where each had expected to hunt alone, and were filled with rage. Through this crowd of mutually repellent vanities Lord Badgery moved with a suavity that seemed unconscious of all the feuds and hatreds. He was enjoying himself immensely. Behind the heavy waxen mask of his face, ambushed behind the Hanoverian nose, the little lustreless pig's eyes, the pale thick lips, there lurked a small devil of happy malice that rocked with laughter.

"So nice of you to have come, Mrs. Mandragore, to do honour to England's artistic past. And I'm so glad to see you've brought dear Mrs. Cayman. And is that Mrs. Nobes, too? So it is! I hadn't noticed her before. How delightful! I knew we could depend on your love of art."

And he hurried away to seize the opportunity of introducing that eminent sculptor, Sir Herbert Herne, to the bright young critic who had called him, in the public prints, a monumental mason.

A moment later the Maître d'Hôtel came to the door of the gilded saloon and announced, loudly and impressively, "Mr. Walter Tillotson." Guided from behind by young Spode, Mr. Tillotson came into the room slowly and hesitatingly. In the glare of the lights his eyelids beat heavily, painfully, like the wings of an imprisoned moth, over his filmy eyes. Once inside the door he halted and drew himself up with a conscious assumption of dignity. Lord Badgery hurried forward and seized his hand.

"Welcome, Mr. Tillotson—welcome in the name of English art!"

Mr. Tillotson inclined his head in silence. He was too full of emotion to be able to reply.

"I should like to introduce you to a few of your younger colleagues, who have assembled here to do you honour."

Lord Badgery presented everyone in the room to the old painter, who bowed, shook hands, made little noises in his throat, but still found himself unable to speak. Mrs. Nobes, Mrs. Cayman, and Mrs. Mandragore all said charming things.

Dinner was served; the party took their places. Lord Badgery sat at the head of the table, with Mr. Tillotson on his right hand and Sir Herbert Herne on his left. Confronted with Bomba's succulent cooking and Bomba's wines, Mr. Tillotson ate and drank a good deal. He had the appetite of one who has lived on greens and potatoes for ten years among the blackbeetles. After the second glass of wine he began to talk, suddenly and in a flood, as though a sluice had been pulled up.

"In Asia Minor," he began, "it is the custom when one goes to dinner, to hiccough as a sign of appreciative fullness. *Eructavit cor meum*, as the Psalmist has it; he was an Oriental himself."

Spode had arranged to sit next to Mrs. Cayman; he had designs upon her. She was an impossible woman, of course, but rich and useful; he wanted to bamboozle her into buying some of his young friends' pictures.

"In a cellar?" Mrs. Cayman was saying, "with blackbeetles? Oh, how dreadful! Poor old man! And he's ninety-seven, didn't you say? Isn't that shocking! I only hope the subscription will be a large one. Of course, one wishes one could have given more oneself. But then, you know, one has so many expenses, and things are so difficult now."

"I know, I know," said Spode, with feeling.

"It's all because of Labour," Mrs. Cayman explained. "Of course, I should simply love to have him in to dinner sometimes. But, then, I feel he's really too old, too *farouche* and *gâteaux*; it would not be doing a kindness to him, would it? And so you are working with Mr. Gollamy now? What a charming man, so talented, such conversation . . ."

"*Eructavit cor meum*," said Mr. Tillotson for the third time. Lord Badgery tried to head him off the subject of Turkish etiquette, but in vain.

By half-past nine a kinder vinolent atmosphere had put to sleep the hatreds and suspicions of before dinner. Sir Herbert Herne had discovered that the young Cubist sitting next him was not insane and actually knew a surprising amount about the Old Masters. For their part these young men had realised that their elders were not at all malignant; they were just very stupid and pathetic. It was only in the bosoms of Mrs. Nobes, Mrs. Cayman, and Mrs. Mandragore that hatred still reigned undiminished. Being ladies and old-fashioned, they had drunk almost no wine.

The moment for speech-making arrived. Lord Badgery rose to his feet, said what was expected of him, and called upon Sir Herbert to propose the toast of the evening. Sir Herbert coughed, smiled and began. In the course of a speech that lasted twenty minutes he told anecdotes of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Leighton, Sir Alma Tadema, and the late Bishop of Bombay; he made three puns, he quoted Shakespeare and Whittier, he was playful, he was eloquent, he was grave. . . . At the end of his harangue Sir Herbert handed to Mr. Tillotson a silk purse containing fifty-eight pounds ten shillings, the total amount of the subscription. The old man's health was drunk with acclamation.

Mr. Tillotson rose with difficulty to his feet. The dry, snake-like skin of his face was flushed; his tie was more crooked than ever; the green ribbon of the Order of Chastity of the second class had somehow climbed up his crumpled and maculate shirt front.

"My lords, ladies, and gentlemen," he began in a choking voice, and then broke down completely. It was a very painful and pathetic spectacle. A feeling of intense discomfort afflicted the minds of all who looked upon that trembling relic of a man, as he stood there weeping and stammering. It was as though a breath of the wind of death had blown suddenly through the

room, lifting the vapours of wine and tobacco-smoke, quenching the laughter and the candle flames. Eyes floated uneasily, not knowing where to look. Lord Badgery, with great presence of mind, offered the old man a glass of wine. Mr. Tillotson began to recover. The guests heard him murmur a few disconnected words.

"This great honour . . . overwhelmed with kindness . . . this magnificent banquet . . . not used to it . . . in Asia Minor . . . *eructavit cor meum*."

At this point Lord Badgery plucked sharply at one of his long coat tails. Mr. Tillotson paused, took another sip of wine, and then went on with a newly won coherence and energy.

"The life of the artist is a hard one. His work is unlike other men's work, which may be done mechanically, by rote and almost, as it were, in sleep. It demands from him a constant expense of spirit. He gives continually of his best life, and in return he receives much joy, it is true—much fame, it may be—but of material blessings, very few. It is eighty years since first I devoted my life to the service of art; eighty years, and almost every one of those years has brought me fresh and painful proof of what I have been saying: the artist's life is a hard one."

This unexpected deviation into sense increased the general feeling of discomfort. It became necessary to take the old man seriously, to regard him as a human being. Up till then he had been no more than an object of curiosity, a mummy in an absurd suit of evening-clothes with a green ribbon across the shirt front. People could not help wishing that they had subscribed a little more. Fifty-eight pounds ten—it wasn't enormous. But happily for the peace of mind of the company, Mr. Tillotson paused again, took another sip of wine, and began to live up to his proper character by talking absurdly.

"When I consider the life of that great man, Benjamin Robert Haydon, one of the greatest men England has ever produced . . ." The audience heaved a sigh of relief; this was all as it should be. There was a burst of loud bravoing and clapping. Mr. Tillotson turned his dim eyes round the room, and smiled gratefully at the misty figures he beheld. "That great man, Benjamin Robert Haydon," he continued, "whom I am proud to call my master and who, it rejoices my heart to see, still lives in your memory and esteem,—that great man, one of the greatest that England has ever produced, led a life so deplorable that I cannot think of it without a tear."

And with infinite repetitions and divagations, Mr. Tillotson related the history of B. R. Haydon, his imprisonments for debt, his battle with the Academy, his triumphs, his failures, his despair, his suicide. Half-past ten struck. Mr. Tillotson was declaiming against the stupid and prejudiced judges who had rejected Haydon's designs for the decoration of the new Houses of Parliament in favour of the paltriest German scribblings.

"That great man, one of the greatest England has ever produced, that great Benjamin Robert Haydon, whom I am proud to call my master and who, it rejoices me to see, still lives on in your memory and esteem—at that affront his great heart burst; it was the unkindest cut of all. He who had worked all his life for the recognition of the artist by the State, he who had petitioned

every Prime Minister, including the Duke of Wellington, for thirty years, begging them to employ artists to decorate public buildings, he to whom the scheme for decorating the Houses of Parliament was undeniably due . . .” Mr. Tillotson lost a grip on his syntax and began a new sentence. “It was the unkindest cut of all, it was the last straw. The artist’s life is a hard one.”

At eleven Mr. Tillotson was talking about the pre-Raphaelites. At a quarter past he had begun to tell the story of B. R. Haydon all over again. At twenty-five minutes to twelve he collapsed quite speechless into his chair. Most of the guests had already gone away; the few who remained made haste to depart. Lord Badgery led the old man to the door and packed him into the second Rolls-Royce. The Tillotson Banquet was over; it had been a pleasant evening, but a little too long.

Spode walked back to his rooms in Bloomsbury, whistling as he went. The arc lamps of Oxford Street reflected in the polished surface of the road; canals of dark bronze. He would have to bring that into an article some time. The Cayman woman had been very successfully nobbled. “Voi che sapete,” he whistled—somewhat out of tune, but he could not hear that.

When Mr. Tillotson’s landlady came in to call him on the following morning, she found the old man lying fully dressed on his bed. He looked very ill and very, very old; Boreham’s dress-suit was in a terrible state, and the green ribbon of the Order of Chastity was ruined. Mr. Tillotson lay very still, but he was not asleep. Hearing the sound of footsteps, he opened his eyes a little and faintly groaned. His landlady looked down at him menacingly.

“Disgusting!” she said; “disgusting, I call it. At your age.”

Mr. Tillotson groaned again. Making a great effort, he drew out of his trouser pocket a large silk purse, opened it, and extracted a sovereign.

“The artist’s life is a hard one, Mrs. Green,” he said, handing her the coin. “Would you mind sending for the doctor? I don’t feel very well. And oh, what shall I do about these clothes? What shall I say to the gentleman who was kind enough to lend them to me? Loan oft loseth both itself and friend. The Bard is always right.”

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM (*b. 1874*), *one of the most urbane and cosmopolitan of modern British writers, is also one of the most prolific. He has published some thirty plays, the best-known being The Circle (1921), a comedy of divorce; many novels, most notably The Moon and Sixpence (1919), a story based on the life in Tahiti of the French artist Paul Gauguin, and his masterpiece, the autobiographical Of Human Bondage (1915), a powerful study of a young medical student’s adjustment both to his professional and to his sexual life; Cakes and Ale (1930), literary reminiscences and personal attacks, in novel form, on Thomas Hardy and Hugh Walpole; travel books like The Gentleman in the Parlour (1930); a witty autobiography, The Summing Up (1938); and many volumes of skillful short stories. His extensive*

travels have enabled him to set his stories in many lands, especially in the Orient. His short stories are collected in East and West (1934). If the student has not already done so, he should read Hamilton Basso's provocative "profile," p. 434.

RED

THE SKIPPER thrust his hand into one of his trouser pockets and with difficulty, for they were not at the sides but in front and he was a portly man, pulled out a large silver watch. He looked at it and then looked again at the declining sun. The Kanaka at the wheel gave him a glance, but did not speak. The skipper's eyes rested on the island they were approaching. A white line of foam marked the reef. He knew there was an opening large enough to get his ship through, and when they came a little nearer he counted on seeing it. They had nearly an hour of daylight still before them. In the lagoon the water was deep and they could anchor comfortably. The chief of the village which he could already see among the coconut trees was a friend of the mate's, and it would be pleasant to go ashore for the night. The mate came forward at that minute and the skipper turned to him.

"We'll take a bottle of booze along with us and get some girls in to dance," he said.

"I don't see the opening," said the mate.

He was a Kanaka, a handsome swarthy fellow, with somewhat the look of a later Roman emperor, inclined to stoutness; but his face was fine and clean-cut.

"I'm dead sure there's one right here," said the captain, looking through his glasses. "I can't understand why I can't pick it up. Send one of the boys up the mast to have a look."

The mate called one of the crew and gave him the order. The captain watched the Kanaka climb and waited for him to speak. But the Kanaka shouted down that he could see nothing but the unbroken line of foam. The captain spoke Samoan like a native, and he cursed him freely.

"Shall he stay up there?" asked the mate.

"What the hell good does that do?" answered the captain. "The blame fool can't see worth a cent. You bet your sweet life I'd find the opening if I was up there."

He looked at the slender mast with anger. It was all very well for a native who had been used to climbing up coconut trees all his life. He was fat and heavy.

"Come down," he shouted. "You're no more use than a dead dog. We'll just have to go along the reef till we find the opening."

It was a seventy-ton schooner with paraffin auxiliary, and it ran, when there

"Red," from *The Trembling of a Leaf*, by W. Somerset Maugham. Copyright 1921 by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

was no head wind, between four and five knots an hour. It was a bedraggled object; it had been painted white a very long time ago, but it was now dirty, dingy, and mottled. It smelt strongly of paraffin and of the copra which was its usual cargo. They were within a hundred feet of the reef now and the captain told the steersman to run along it till they came to the opening. But when they had gone a couple of miles he realised that they had missed it. He went about and slowly worked back again. The white foam of the reef continued without interruption and now the sun was setting. With a curse at the stupidity of the crew the skipper resigned himself to waiting till next morning.

"Put her about," he said. "I can't anchor here."

They went out to sea a little and presently it was quite dark. They anchored. When the sail was furled the ship began to roll a good deal. They said in Apia that one day she would roll right over; and the owner, a German-American who managed one of the largest stores, said that no money was big enough to induce him to go out in her. The cook, a Chinese in white trousers, very dirty and ragged, and a thin white tunic, came to say that supper was ready, and when the skipper went into the cabin he found the engineer already seated at table. The engineer was a long lean man with a scraggy neck. He was dressed in blue overalls and a sleeveless jersey which showed his thin arms tattooed from elbow to wrist.

"Hell, having to spend the night outside," said the skipper.

The engineer did not answer, and they ate their supper in silence. The cabin was lit by a dim oil lamp. When they had eaten the canned apricots with which the meal finished, the Chink brought them a cup of tea. The skipper lit a cigar and went on the upper deck. The island now was only a darker mass against the night. The stars were very bright. The only sound was the ceaseless breaking of the surf. The skipper sank into a deck-chair and smoked idly. Presently three or four members of the crew came up and sat down. One of them had a banjo and another a concertina. They began to play, and one of them sang. The native song sounded strange on these instruments. Then to the singing a couple began to dance. It was a barbaric dance, savage and primeval, rapid, with quick movements of the hands and feet and contortions of the body; it was sensual, sexual even, but sexual without passion. It was very animal, direct, weird without mystery, natural in short, and one might almost say childlike. At last they grew tired. They stretched themselves on the deck and slept, and all was silent. The skipper lifted himself heavily out of his chair and clambered down the companion. He went into his cabin and got out of his clothes. He climbed into his bunk and lay there. He panted a little in the heat of the night.

But next morning, when the dawn crept over the tranquil sea, the opening in the reef which had eluded them the night before was seen a little to the east of where they lay. The schooner entered the lagoon. There was not a ripple on the surface of the water. Deep down among the coral rocks you saw little coloured fish swim. When he had anchored his ship the skipper ate his breakfast and went on deck. The sun shone from an unclouded sky, but

in the early morning the air was grateful and cool. It was Sunday, and there was a feeling of quietness, a silence as though nature were at rest, which gave him a peculiar sense of comfort. He sat, looking at the wooded coast, and felt lazy and well at ease. Presently a slow smile moved his lips and he threw the stump of his cigar into the water.

"I guess I'll go ashore," he said. "Get the boat out."

He climbed stiffly down the ladder and was rowed to a little cove. The coconut trees came down to the water's edge, not in rows, but spaced out with an ordered formality. They were like a ballet of spinsters, elderly but flippant, standing in affected attitudes with the simpering graces of a bygone age. He sauntered idly through them, along a path that could be just seen winding its tortuous way, and it led him presently to a broad creek. There was a bridge across it, but a bridge constructed of single trunks of coconut trees, a dozen of them, placed end to end and supported where they met by a forked branch driven into the bed of the creek. You walked on a smooth, round surface, narrow and slippery, and there was no support for the hand. To cross such a bridge required sure feet and a stout heart. The skipper hesitated. But he saw on the other side, nestling among the trees, a white man's house; he made up his mind and, rather gingerly, began to walk. He watched his feet carefully, and where one trunk joined on to the next and there was a difference of level, he tottered a little. It was with a gasp of relief that he reached the last tree and finally set his feet on the firm ground of the other side. He had been so intent on the difficult crossing that he never noticed anyone was watching him, and it was with surprise that he heard himself spoken to.

"It takes a bit of nerve to cross these bridges when you're not used to them."

He looked up and saw a man standing in front of him. He had evidently come out of the house which he had seen.

"I saw you hesitate," the man continued, with a smile on his lips, "and I was watching to see you fall in."

"Not on your life," said the captain, who had now recovered his confidence.

"I've fallen in myself before now. I remember, one evening I came back from shooting, and I fell in, gun and all. Now I get a boy to carry my gun for me."

He was a man no longer young, with a small beard, now somewhat grey, and a thin face. He was dressed in a singlet, without arms, and a pair of duck trousers. He wore neither shoes nor socks. He spoke English with a slight accent.

"Are you Neilson?" asked the skipper.

"I am."

"I've heard about you. I thought you lived somewheres round here."

The skipper followed his host into the little bungalow and sat down heavily in the chair which the other motioned him to take. While Neilson went out to fetch whisky and glasses he took a look round the room. It filled him with amazement. He had never seen so many books. The shelves reached from floor to ceiling on all four walls, and they were closely packed. There was a

grand piano littered with music, and a large table on which books and magazines lay in disorder. The room made him feel embarrassed. He remembered that Neilson was a queer fellow. No one knew very much about him, although he had been in the islands for so many years, but those who knew him agreed that he was queer. He was a Swede.

"You've got one big heap of books here," he said, when Neilson returned.

"They do no harm," answered Neilson with a smile.

"Have you read them all?" asked the skipper.

"Most of them."

"I'm a bit of a reader myself. I have the *Saturday Evening Post* sent me reglar."

Neilson poured his visitor a good stiff glass of whisky and gave him a cigar. The skipper volunteered a little information.

"I got in last night, but I couldn't find the opening, so I had to anchor outside. I never been this run before, but my people had some stuff they wanted to bring over here. Gray, d'you know him?"

"Yes, he's got a store a little way along."

"Well, there was a lot of canned stuff that he wanted over, an' he's got some copra. They thought I might just as well come over as lie idle at Apia. I run between Apia and Pago-Pago mostly, but they've got smallpox there just now, and there's nothing stirring."

He took a drink of his whisky and lit a cigar. He was a taciturn man, but there was something in Neilson that made him nervous, and his nervousness made him talk. The Swede was looking at him with large dark eyes in which there was an expression of faint amusement.

"This is a tidy little place you've got here."

"I've done my best with it."

"You must do pretty well with your trees. They look fine. With copra at the price it is now. I had a bit of a plantation myself once, in Upolu it was, but I had to sell it."

He looked round the room again, where all those books gave him a feeling of something incomprehensible and hostile.

"I guess you must find it a bit lonesome here though," he said.

"I've got used to it. I've been here for twenty-five years."

Now the captain could think of nothing more to say, and he smoked in silence. Neilson had apparently no wish to break it. He looked at his guest with a meditative eye. He was a tall man, more than six feet high, and very stout. His face was red and blotchy, with a network of little purple veins on the cheeks, and his features were sunk into its fatness. His eyes were blood-shot. His neck was buried in rolls of fat. But for a fringe of long curly hair, nearly white, at the back of his head, he was quite bald; and that immense, shiny surface of forehead, which might have given him a false look of intelligence, on the contrary gave him one of peculiar imbecility. He wore a blue flannel shirt, open at the neck and showing his fat chest covered with a mat of reddish hair, and a very old pair of blue serge trousers. He sat in his chair in a heavy ungainly attitude, his great belly thrust forward and his fat legs

uncrossed. All elasticity had gone from his limbs. Neilson wondered idly what sort of man he had been in his youth. It was almost impossible to imagine that this creature of vast bulk had ever been a boy who ran about. The skipper finished his whisky, and Neilson pushed the bottle towards him.

"Help yourself."

The skipper leaned forward and with his great hand seized it.

"And how come you in these parts anyways?" he said.

"Oh, I came out to the islands for my health. My lungs were bad and they said I hadn't a year to live. You see they were wrong."

"I meant, how come you to settle down right here?"

"I am a sentimentalist."

"Oh!"

Neilson knew that the skipper had not an idea what he meant, and he looked at him with an ironical twinkle in his dark eyes. Perhaps just because the skipper was so gross and dull a man the whim seized him to talk further.

"You were too busy keeping your balance to notice, when you crossed the bridge, but this spot is generally considered rather pretty."

"It's a cute little house you've got here."

"Ah, that wasn't here when I first came. There was a native hut, with its beehive roof and its pillars, overshadowed by a great tree with red flowers; and the croton bushes, their leaves yellow and red and golden, made a pied fence around it. And then all about were the coconut trees, as fanciful as women, and as vain. They stood at the water's edge and spent all day looking at their reflections. I was a young man then—Good Heavens, it's a quarter of a century ago—and I wanted to enjoy all the loveliness of the world in the short time allotted to me before I passed into the darkness. I thought it was the most beautiful spot I had ever seen. The first time I saw it I had a catch at my heart, and I was afraid I was going to cry. I wasn't more than twenty-five, and though I put the best face I could on it, I didn't want to die. And somehow it seemed to me that the very beauty of this place made it easier for me to accept my fate. I felt when I came here that all my past life had fallen away, Stockholm and its University, and then Bonn: it all seemed the life of somebody else, as though now at last I had achieved the reality which our doctors of philosophy—I am one myself, you know—had discussed so much. 'A year,' I cried to myself. 'I have a year. I will spend it here and then I am content to die.'

"We are foolish and sentimental and melodramatic at twenty-five, but if we weren't perhaps we should be less wise at fifty."

"Now drink, my friend. Don't let the nonsense I talk interfere with you."

He waved his thin hand towards the bottle, and the skipper finished what remained in his glass.

"You ain't drinking nothin'," he said, reaching for the whisky.

"I am of a sober habit," smiled the Swede. "I intoxicate myself in ways which I fancy are more subtle. But perhaps that is only vanity. Anyhow, the effects are more lasting and the results less deleterious."

"They say there's a deal of cocaine taken in the States now," said the captain.

Neilson chuckled.

"But I do not see a white man often," he continued, "and for once I don't think a drop of whisky can do me any harm."

He poured himself out a little, added some soda, and took a sip.

"And presently I found out why the spot had such an unearthly loveliness. Here love had tarried for a moment like a migrant bird that happens on a ship in mid-ocean and for a little while folds its tired wings. The fragrance of a beautiful passion hovered over it like the fragrance of hawthorn in May in the meadows of my home. It seems to me that the places where men have loved or suffered keep about them always some faint aroma of something that has not wholly died. It is as though they had acquired a spiritual significance which mysteriously affects those who pass. I wish I could make myself clear." He smiled a little. "Though I cannot imagine that if I did you would understand."

He paused.

"I think this place was beautiful because here I had been loved beautifully." And now he shrugged his shoulders. "But perhaps it is only that my esthetic sense is gratified by the happy conjunction of young love and a suitable setting."

Even a man less thick-witted than the skipper might have been forgiven if he were bewildered by Neilson's words. For he seemed faintly to laugh at what he said. It was as though he spoke from emotion which his intellect found ridiculous. He had said himself that he was a sentimentalist, and when sentimentality is joined with scepticism there is often the devil to pay.

He was silent for an instant and looked at the captain with eyes in which there was a sudden perplexity.

"You know, I can't help thinking that I've seen you before somewhere or other," he said.

"I couldn't say as I remember you," returned the skipper.

"I have a curious feeling as though your face were familiar to me. It's been puzzling me for some time. But I can't situate my recollection in any place or at any time."

The skipper massively shrugged his heavy shoulders.

"It's thirty years since I first came to the islands. A man can't figure on remembering all the folk he meets in a while like that."

The Swede shook his head.

"You know how one sometimes has the feeling that a place one has never been to before is strangely familiar. That's how I seem to see you." He gave a whimsical smile. "Perhaps I knew you in some past existence. Perhaps, perhaps you were the master of a galley in ancient Rome and I was a slave at the oar. Thirty years have you been here?"

"Every bit of thirty years."

"I wonder if you knew a man called Red?"

"Red?"

"That is the only name I've ever known him by. I never knew him personally. I never even set eyes on him. And yet I seem to see him more clearly than many men, my brothers, for instance, with whom I passed my daily life for many years. He lives in my imagination with the distinctness of a Paolo Malatesta or a Romeo. But I daresay you have never read Dante or Shakespeare?"

"I can't say as I have," said the captain.

Neilson, smoking a cigar, leaned back in his chair and looked vacantly at the ring of smoke which floated in the still air. A smile played on his lips, but his eyes were grave. Then he looked at the captain. There was in his gross obesity something extraordinarily repellent. He had the plethoric self-satisfaction of the very fat. It was an outrage. It set Neilson's nerves on edge. But the contrast between the man before him and the man he had in mind was pleasant.

"It appears that Red was the most comely thing you ever saw. I've talked to quite a number of people who knew him in those days, white men, and they all agree that the first time you saw him his beauty just took your breath away. They called him Red on account of his flaming hair. It had a natural wave and he wore it long. It must have been of that wonderful colour that the pre-Raphaelites raved over. I don't think he was vain of it, he was much too ingenuous for that, but no one could have blamed him if he had been. He was tall, six feet and an inch or two—in the native house that used to stand here was the mark of his height cut with a knife on the central trunk that supported the roof—and he was made like a Greek god, broad in the shoulders and thin in the flanks; he was like Apollo, with just that soft roundness which Praxiteles gave him, and that suave, feminine grace which has in it something troubling and mysterious. His skin was dazzling white, milky, like satin; his skin was like a woman's."

"I had kind of a white skin myself when I was a kiddie," said the skipper, with a twinkle in his bloodshot eyes.

But Neilson paid no attention to him. He was telling his story now and interruption made him impatient.

"And his face was just as beautiful as his body. He had large blue eyes, very dark, so that some say they were black, and unlike most red-haired people he had dark eyebrows and long dark lashes. His features were perfectly regular and his mouth was like a scarlet wound. He was twenty."

On these words the Swede stopped with a certain sense of the dramatic. He took a sip of whisky.

"He was unique. There never was anyone more beautiful. There was no more reason for him than for a wonderful blossom to flower on a wild plant. He was a happy accident of nature."

"One day he landed at that cove into which you must have put this morning. He was an American sailor, and he had deserted from a man-of-war in Apia. He had induced some good-humoured native to give him a passage on a cutter that happened to be sailing from Apia to Safoto, and he had been put ashore here in a dug-out. I do not know why he deserted. Perhaps life on a man-of-

war with its restrictions irked him, perhaps he was in trouble, and perhaps it was the South Seas and these romantic islands that got into his bones. Every now and then they take a man strangely, and he finds himself like a fly in a spider's web. It may be that there was a softness of fibre in him, and these green hills with their soft airs, this blue sea, took the northern strength from him as Delilah took the Nazarite's. Anyhow, he wanted to hide himself, and he thought he would be safe in this secluded nook till his ship had sailed from Samoa.

"There was a native hut at the cove and as he stood there, wondering where exactly he should turn his steps, a young girl came out and invited him to enter. He knew scarcely two words of the native tongue and she as little English. But he understood well enough what her smiles meant, and her pretty gestures, and he followed her. He sat down on a mat and she gave him slices of pineapple to eat. I can speak of Red only from hearsay, but I saw the girl three years after he first met her, and she was scarcely nineteen then. You cannot imagine how exquisite she was. She had the passionate grace of the hibiscus and the rich colour. She was rather tall, slim, with the delicate features of her race, and large eyes like pools of still water under the palm trees; her hair, black and curling, fell down her back, and she wore a wreath of scented flowers. Her hands were lovely. They were so small, so exquisitely formed, they gave your heart-strings a wrench. And in those days she laughed easily. Her smile was so delightful that it made your knees shake. Her skin was like a field of ripe corn on a summer day. Good Heavens, how can I describe her? She was too beautiful to be real.

"And these two young things, she was sixteen and he was twenty, fell in love with one another at first sight. That is the real love, not the love that comes from sympathy, common interests, or intellectual community, but love pure and simple. That is the love that Adam felt for Eve when he awoke and found her in the garden gazing at him with dewy eyes. That is the love that draws the beasts to one another, and the Gods. That is the love that makes the world a miracle. That is the love which gives life its pregnant meaning. You have never heard of the wise, cynical French duke who said that with two lovers there is always one who loves and one who lets himself be loved; it is a bitter truth to which most of us have to resign ourselves; but now and then there are two who love and two who let themselves be loved. Then one might fancy that the sun stands still as it stood when Joshua prayed to the God of Israel.

"And even now after all these years, when I think of these two, so young, so fair, so simple, and of their love, I feel a pang. It tears my heart just as my heart is torn when on certain nights I watch the full moon shining on the lagoon from an unclouded sky. There is always pain in the contemplation of perfect beauty.

"They were children. She was good and sweet and kind. I know nothing of him, and I like to think that then at all events he was ingenuous and frank. I like to think that his soul was as comely as his body. But I daresay he had no more soul than the creatures of the woods and forests who made pipes

from reeds and bathed in the mountain streams when the world was young, and you might catch sight of little fauns galloping through the glade on the back of a bearded centaur. A soul is a troublesome possession and when man developed it he lost the Garden of Eden.

"Well, when Red came to the island it had recently been visited by one of those epidemics which the white man has brought to the South Seas, and one-third of the inhabitants had died. It seems that the girl had lost all her near kin and she lived now in the house of distant cousins. The household consisted of two ancient crones, bowed and wrinkled, two younger women, and a man and a boy. For a few days he stayed there. But perhaps he felt himself too near the shore, with the possibility that he might fall in with white men who would reveal his hiding-place; perhaps the lovers could not bear that the company of others should rob them for an instant of the delight of being together. One morning they set out, the pair of them, with the few things that belonged to the girl, and walked along a grassy path under the coconuts, till they came to the creek you see. They had to cross the bridge you crossed, and the girl laughed gleefully because he was afraid. She held his hand till they came to the end of the first tree, and then his courage failed him and he had to go back. He was obliged to take off all his clothes before he could risk it, and she carried them over for him on her head. They settled down in the empty hut that stood here. Whether she had any rights over it (land tenure is a complicated business in the islands), or whether the owner had died during the epidemic, I do not know, but anyhow no one questioned them, and they took possession. Their furniture consisted of a couple of grass mats on which they slept, a fragment of looking-glass, and a bowl or two. In this pleasant land that is enough to start housekeeping on.

"They say that happy people have no history, and certainly a happy love has none. They did nothing all day long and yet the days seemed all too short. The girl had a native name, but Red called her Sally. He picked up the easy language very quickly, and he used to lie on the mat for hours while she chattered gaily to him. He was a silent fellow, and perhaps his mind was lethargic. He smoked incessantly the cigarettes which she made him out of the native tobacco and pandanus leaf, and he watched her while with deft fingers she made grass mats. Often natives would come in and tell long stories of the old days when the island was disturbed by tribal wars. Sometimes he would go fishing on the reef, and bring home a basket full of coloured fish. Sometimes at night he would go out with a lantern to catch lobster. There were plantains round the hut and Sally would roast them for their frugal meal. She knew how to make delicious messes from coconuts, and the breadfruit tree by the side of the creek gave them its fruit. On feast-days they killed a little pig and cooked it on hot stones. They bathed together in the creek; and in the evening they went down to the lagoon and paddled about in a dug-out, with its great outrigger. The sea was deep blue, wine-coloured at sundown, like the sea of Homeric Greece; but in the lagoon the colour had an infinite variety, aquamarine and amethyst and emerald; and the setting sun turned it for a short moment to liquid gold. Then there was the colour of the coral, brown, white,

pink, red, purple; and the shapes it took were marvellous. It was like a magic garden, and the hurrying fish were like butterflies. It strangely lacked reality. Among the coral were pools with a floor of white sand and here, where the water was dazzling clear, it was very good to bathe. Then, cool and happy, they wandered back in the gloaming over the soft grass road to the creek, walking hand in hand, and now the mynah birds filled the coconut trees with their clamour. And then the night, with that great sky shining with gold, that seemed to stretch more widely than the skies of Europe, and the soft airs that blew gently through the open hut, the long night again was all too short. She was sixteen and he was barely twenty. The dawn crept in among the wooden pillars of the hut and looked at those lovely children sleeping in one another's arms. The sun hid behind the great tattered leaves of the plantains so that it might not disturb them, and then, with playful malice, shot a golden ray, like the outstretched paw of a Persian cat, on their faces. They opened their sleepy eyes and they smiled to welcome another day. The weeks lengthened into months, and a year passed. They seemed to love one another as—I hesitate to say passionately, for passion has in it always a shade of sadness, a touch of bitterness or anguish, but as whole-heartedly, as simply and naturally as on that first day on which, meeting, they had recognized that a god was in them.

"If you had asked them I have no doubt that they would have thought it impossible to suppose their love could ever cease. Do we not know that the essential element of love is a belief in its own eternity? And yet perhaps in Red there was already a very little seed, unknown to himself and unsuspected by the girl, which would in time have grown to weariness. For one day one of the natives from the cove told them that some way down the coast at the anchorage was a British whaling-ship.

"'Gee,' he said, 'I wonder if I could make a trade of some nuts and plantains for a pound or two of tobacco.'

"The pandanus cigarettes that Sally made him with untiring hands were strong and pleasant enough to smoke, but they left him unsatisfied; and he yearned on a sudden for real tobacco, hard, rank, and pungent. He had not smoked a pipe for many months. His mouth watered at the thought of it. One would have thought some premonition of harm would have made Sally seek to dissuade him, but love possessed her so completely that it never occurred to her any power on earth could take him from her. They went up into the hills together and gathered a great basket of wild oranges, green, but sweet and juicy; and they picked plantains from around the hut, and coconuts from their trees, and breadfruit and mangoes; and they carried them down to the cove. They loaded the unstable canoe with them, and Red and the native boy who had brought them the news of the ship paddled along outside the reef.

"It was the last time she ever saw him.

"Next day the boy came back alone. He was all in tears. This is the story he told. When after their long paddle they reached the ship and Red hailed it, a white man looked over the side and told them to come on board. They

took the fruit they had brought with them and Red piled it up on the deck. The white man and he began to talk, and they seemed to come to some agreement. One of them went below and brought up tobacco. Red took some at once and lit a pipe. The boy imitated the zest with which he blew a great cloud of smoke from his mouth. Then they said something to him and he went into the cabin. Through the open door the boy, watching curiously, saw a bottle brought out and glasses. Red drank and smoked. They seemed to ask him something, for he shook his head and laughed. The man, the first man who had spoken to them, laughed too, and he filled Red's glass once more. They went on talking and drinking, and presently, growing tired of watching a sight that meant nothing to him, the boy curled himself up on the deck and slept. He was awakened by a kick; and, jumping to his feet, he saw that the ship was slowly sailing out of the lagoon. He caught sight of Red seated at the table, with his head resting heavily on his arms, fast asleep. He made a movement towards him, intending to wake him, but a rough hand seized his arm, and a man, with a scowl and words which he did not understand, pointed to the side. He shouted to Red, but in a moment he was seized and flung overboard. Helpless, he swam round to his canoe which was drifting a little way off, and pushed it on to the reef. He climbed in and, sobbing all the way, paddled back to shore.

"What had happened was obvious enough. The whaler, by desertion or sickness, was short of hands, and the captain when Red came aboard had asked him to sign on; on his refusal he had made him drunk and kidnapped him.

"Sally was beside herself with grief. For three days she screamed and cried. The natives did what they could to comfort her, but she would not be comforted. She would not eat. And then, exhausted, she sank into a sullen apathy. She spent long days at the cove, watching the lagoon, in the vain hope that Red somehow or other would manage to escape. She sat on the white sand, hour after hour, with the tears running down her cheeks, and at night dragged herself wearily back across the creek to the little hut where she had been happy. The people with whom she had lived before Red came to the island wished her to return to them, but she would not; she was convinced that Red would come back, and she wanted him to find her where he had left her. Four months later she was delivered of a still-born child, and the old woman who had come to help her through her confinement remained with her in the hut. All joy was taken from her life. If her anguish with time became less intolerable it was replaced by a settled melancholy. You would not have thought that among these people, whose emotions, though so violent, are very transient, a woman could be found capable of so enduring a passion. She never lost the profound conviction that sooner or later Red would come back. She watched for him, and every time someone crossed this slender little bridge of coconut trees she looked. It might at last be he."

Neilson stopped talking and gave a faint sigh.

"And what happened to her in the end?" asked the skipper.

Neilson smiled bitterly.

"Oh, three years afterwards she took up with another white man."

The skipper gave a fat, cynical chuckle.

"That's generally what happens to them," he said.

The Swede shot him a look of hatred. He did not know why that gross, obese man excited in him so violent a repulsion. But his thoughts wandered and he found his mind filled with memories of the past. He went back five-and-twenty years. It was when he first came to the island, weary of Apia, with its heavy drinking, its gambling and coarse sensuality, a sick man, trying to resign himself to the loss of the career which had fired his imagination with ambitious thoughts. He set behind him resolutely all his hopes of making a great name for himself and strove to content himself with the few poor months of careful life which was all that he could count on. He was boarding with a half-caste trader who had a store a couple of miles along the coast at the edge of a native village; and one day, wandering aimlessly along the grassy paths of the coconut groves, he had come upon the hut in which Sally lived. The beauty of the spot had filled him with a rapture so great that it was almost painful, and then he had seen Sally. She was the loveliest creature he had ever seen, and the sadness in those dark, magnificent eyes of hers affected him strangely. The Kanakas were a handsome race, and beauty was not rare among them, but it was the beauty of shapely animals. It was empty. But those tragic eyes were dark with mystery, and you felt in them the bitter complexity of the groping, human soul. The trader told him the story and it moved him.

"Do you think he'll ever come back?" asked Neilson.

"No fear. Why, it'll be a couple of years before the ship is paid off, and by then he'll have forgotten all about her. I bet he was pretty mad when he woke up and found he'd been shanghaied, and I shouldn't wonder but he wanted to fight somebody. But he'd got to grin and bear it, and I guess in a month he was thinking it the best thing that had ever happened to him that he got away from the island."

But Neilson could not get the story out of his head. Perhaps because he was sick and weakly, the radiant health of Red appealed to his imagination. Himself an ugly man, insignificant of appearance, he prized very highly comeliness in others. He had never been passionately in love, and certainly he had never been passionately loved. The mutual attraction of those two young things gave him a singular delight. It had the ineffable beauty of the Absolute. He went again to the little hut by the creek. He had a gift for languages and an energetic mind, accustomed to work, and he had already given much time to the study of the local tongue. Old habit was strong in him and he was gathering together material for a paper on the Samoan speech. The old crone who shared the hut with Sally invited him to come in and sit down. She gave him *kava* to drink and cigarettes to smoke. She was glad to have someone to chat with and while she talked he looked at Sally. She reminded him of the Psyche in the museum at Naples. Her features had the same clear purity of line, and though she had borne a child she had still a virginal aspect.

It was not till he had seen her two or three times that he induced her to speak. Then it was only to ask him if he had seen in Apia a man called Red.

Two years had passed since his disappearance, but it was plain that she still thought of him incessantly.

It did not take Neilson long to discover that he was in love with her. It was only by an effort of will now that he prevented himself from going every day to the creek, and when he was not with Sally his thoughts were. At first, looking upon himself as a dying man, he asked only to look at her, and occasionally hear her speak, and his love gave him a wonderful happiness. He exulted in its purity. He wanted nothing from her but the opportunity to weave around her graceful person a web of beautiful fancies. But the open air, the equable temperature, the rest, the simple fare, began to have an unexpected effect on his health. His temperature did not soar at night to such alarming heights, he coughed less and began to put on weight; six months passed without his having a haemorrhage; and on a sudden he saw the possibility that he might live. He had studied his disease carefully, and the hope dawned upon him that with great care he might arrest its course. It exhilarated him to look forward once more to the future. He made plans. It was evident that any active life was out of the question, but he could live on the islands, and the small income he had, insufficient elsewhere, would be ample to keep him. He could grow coconuts; that would give him an occupation; and he would send for his books and a piano; but his quick mind saw that in all this he was merely trying to conceal from himself the desire which obsessed him.

He wanted Sally. He loved not only her beauty, but that dim soul which he divined behind her suffering eyes. He would intoxicate her with his passion. In the end he would make her forget. And in an ecstasy of surrender he fancied himself giving her too the happiness which he had thought never to know again, but had now so miraculously achieved.

He asked her to live with him. She refused. He had expected that and did not let it depress him, for he was sure that sooner or later she would yield. His love was irresistible. He told the old woman of his wishes, and found somewhat to his surprise that she and the neighbours, long aware of them, were strongly urging Sally to accept his offer. After all, every native was glad to keep house for a white man, and Neilson according to the standards of the island was a rich one. The trader with whom he boarded went to her and told her not to be a fool; such an opportunity would not come again, and after so long she could not still believe that Red would ever return. The girl's resistance only increased Neilson's desire, and what had been a very pure love now became an agonizing passion. He was determined that nothing should stand in his way. He gave Sally no peace. At last, worn out by his persistence and the persuasions, by turns pleading and angry, of everyone around her, she consented. But the day after when, exultant, he went to see her he found that in the night she had burnt down the hut in which she and Red had lived together. The old crone ran towards him full of angry abuse of Sally, but he waved her aside; it did not matter; they would build a bungalow on the place where the hut had stood. A European house would really be more convenient if he wanted to bring out a piano and a vast number of books.

And so the little wooden house was built in which he had now lived for

many years, and Sally became his wife. But after the first few weeks of rapture, during which he was satisfied with what she gave him, he had known little happiness. She had yielded to him, through weariness, but she had only yielded what she set no store on. The soul which he had dimly glimpsed escaped him. He knew that she cared nothing for him. She still loved Red, and all the time she was waiting for his return. At a sign from him, Neilson knew that, notwithstanding his love, his tenderness, his sympathy, his generosity, she would leave him without a moment's hesitation. She would never give a thought to his distress. Anguish seized him and he battered at that impenetrable self of hers which sullenly resisted him. His love became bitter. He tried to melt her heart with kindness, but it remained as hard as before; he feigned indifference, but she did not notice it. Sometimes he lost his temper and abused her, and then she wept silently. Sometimes he thought she was nothing but a fraud, and that soul simply an invention of his own, and that he could not get into the sanctuary of her heart because there was no sanctuary there. His love became a prison from which he longed to escape, but he had not the strength merely to open the door—that was all it needed—and walk out into the open air. It was torture and at last he became numb and hopeless. In the end the fire burnt itself out and, when he saw her eyes rest for an instant on the slender bridge, it was no longer rage that filled his heart but impatience. For many years now they had lived together bound by the ties of habit and convenience, and it was with a smile that he looked back on his old passion. She was an old woman, for the women on the islands age quickly, and if he had no love for her any more he had tolerance. She left him alone. He was contented with his piano and his books.

His thoughts led him to a desire for words.

"When I look back now and reflect on that brief passionate love of Red and Sally, I think that perhaps they should thank the ruthless fate that separated them when their love seemed still to be at its height. They suffered, but they suffered in beauty. They were spared the real tragedy of love."

"I don't know exactly as I get you," said the skipper.

"The tragedy of love is not death or separation. How long do you think it would have been before one or other of them ceased to care? Oh, it is dreadfully bitter to look at a woman whom you have loved with all your heart and soul, so that you felt you could not bear to let her out of your sight, and realize that you would not mind if you never saw her again. The tragedy of love is indifference."

But while he was speaking a very extraordinary thing happened. Though he had been addressing the skipper he had not been talking to him, he had been putting his thoughts into words for himself, and with his eyes fixed on the man in front of him he had not seen him. But now an image presented itself to them, an image not of the man he saw, but of another man. It was as though he were looking into one of those distorting mirrors that make you extraordinarily squat or outrageously elongate, but here exactly the opposite took place, and in the obese, ugly old man he caught the shadowy glimpse of a stripling. He gave him now a quick, searching scrutiny. Why had a hap-

hazard stroll brought him just to this place? A sudden tremor of his heart made him slightly breathless. An absurd suspicion seized him. What had occurred to him was impossible, and yet it might be a fact.

"What is your name?" he asked abruptly.

The skipper's face puckered and he gave a cunning chuckle. He looked then malicious and horribly vulgar.

"It's such a damned long time since I heard it that I almost forget it myself. But for thirty years now in the islands they've always called me Red."

His huge form shook as he gave a low, almost silent laugh. It was obscene. Neilson shuddered. Red was hugely amused, and from his bloodshot eyes tears ran down his cheeks.

Neilson gave a gasp, for at that moment a woman came in. She was a native, a woman of somewhat commanding presence, stout without being corpulent, dark, for the natives grow darker with age, with very grey hair. She wore a black Mother Hubbard, and its thinness showed her heavy breasts. The moment had come.

She made an observation to Neilson about some household matter and he answered. He wondered if his voice sounded as unnatural to her as it did to himself. She gave the man who was sitting in the chair by the window an indifferent glance, and went out of the room. The moment had come and gone.

Neilson for a moment could not speak. He was strangely shaken. Then he said:

"I'd be very glad if you'd stay and have a bit of dinner with me. Pot luck."

"I don't think I will," said Red. "I must go after this fellow Gray. I'll give him his stuff and then I'll get away. I want to be back in Apia tomorrow."

"I'll send a boy along with you to show you the way."

"That'll be fine."

Red heaved himself out of his chair, while the Swede called one of the boys who worked on the plantation. He told him where the skipper wanted to go, and the boy stepped along the bridge. Red prepared to follow him.

"Don't fall in," said Neilson.

"Not on your life."

Neilson watched him make his way across and when he had disappeared among the coconuts he looked still. Then he sank heavily in his chair. Was that the man who had prevented him from being happy? Was that the man whom Sally had loved all these years and for whom she had waited so desperately? It was grotesque. A sudden fury seized him so that he had an instinct to spring up and smash everything around him. He had been cheated. They had seen each other at last and had not known it. He began to laugh, mirthlessly, and his laughter grew till it became hysterical. The Gods had played him a cruel trick. And he was old now.

At last Sally came in to tell him dinner was ready. He sat down in front of her and tried to eat. He wondered what she would say if he told her now that the fat old man sitting in the chair was the lover whom she remembered still with the passionate abandonment of her youth. Years ago, when he hated

her because she made him so unhappy, he would have been glad to tell her. He wanted to hurt her then as she hurt him, because his hatred was only love. But now he did not care. He shrugged his shoulders listlessly.

"What did that man want?" she asked presently.

He did not answer at once. She was old too, a fat old native woman. He wondered why he had ever loved her so madly. He had laid at her feet all the treasures of his soul, and she had cared nothing for them. Waste, what waste! And now, when he looked at her, he felt only contempt. His patience was at last exhausted. He answered her question.

"He's the captain of a schooner. He's come from Apia."

"Yes."

"He brought me news from home. My eldest brother is very ill and I must go back."

"Will you be gone long?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

ALBERT MALTZ (*b. 1908*) has dealt almost entirely with problems of human welfare. His plays, except his one-act pacifist play, *Private Hicks* (1935), have been less successful than his strong, sincere short stories like "*Season for Celebration*," a study of a Bowery flophouse (in *The Flying Yorkshireman*, 1938), "*The Happiest Man on Earth*," a tragedy of unemployment which won the O. Henry Memorial Prize for 1938, and "*Man on a Road*" (1935). His stories have been collected in *The Way Things Are* (1938) and *The Underground Stream* (1940).

MAN ON A ROAD

AT ABOUT four in the afternoon I crossed the bridge at Gauley, West Virginia, and turned the sharp curve leading into the tunnel under the railroad bridge. I had been over this road once before and knew what to expect—by the time I entered the tunnel I had my car down to about ten miles an hour. But even at that speed I came closer to running a man down than I ever have before. This is how it happened.

The patched, macadam road had been soaked through by an all-day rain and now it was as slick as ice. In addition, it was quite dark—a black sky and a steady, swishing rain made driving impossible without headlights. As I entered the tunnel a big cream colored truck swung fast around the curve on the other side. The curve was so sharp that his headlights had given me no warning. The tunnel was short and narrow, just about passing space for two

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cars, and before I knew it he was in front of me with his big, front wheels over on my side of the road.

I jammed on my brakes. Even at ten miles an hour my car skidded, first toward the truck and then, as I wrenched on the wheel, in toward the wall. There it stalled. The truck swung around hard, scraped my fender, and passed through the tunnel about an inch away from me. I could see the tense face of the young driver with the tight bulge of tobacco in his cheek and his eyes glued on the road. I remember saying to myself that I hoped he'd swallow that tobacco and go choke himself.

I started my car and shifted into first. It was then I saw for the first time that a man was standing in front of my car about a foot away from the inside wheel. It was a shock to see him there. "For Chrissakes," I said.

My first thought was that he had walked into the tunnel after my car had stalled. I was certain he hadn't been in there before. Then I noticed that he was standing profile to me with his hand held up in the hitch-hiker's gesture. If he had walked into that tunnel, he'd be facing me—he wouldn't be standing sideways looking at the opposite wall. Obviously I had just missed knocking him down and obviously he didn't know it. He didn't even know I was there.

It made me run weak inside. I had a picture of a man lying crushed under a wheel with me standing over him knowing it was my car.

I called out to him "Hey!" He didn't answer me. I called louder. He didn't even turn his head. He stood there, fixed, his hand up in the air, his thumb jutting out. It scared me. It was like a story by Bierce where the ghost of a man pops out of the air to take up his lonely post on a dark country road.

My horn is a good, loud raucous one and I knew that the tunnel would re-double the sound. I slapped my hand down on that little black button and pressed as hard as I could. The man was either going to jump or else prove that he was a ghost.

Well, he wasn't a ghost—but he didn't jump, either. And it wasn't because he was deaf. He heard that horn all right.

He was like a man in a deep sleep. The horn seemed to awaken him only by degrees, as though his whole consciousness had been sunk in some deep recess within himself. He turned his head slowly and looked at me. He was a big man, about thirty-five with a heavy-featured face—an ordinary face with a big, fleshy nose and a large mouth. The face didn't say much. I wouldn't have called it kind or brutal or intelligent or stupid. It was just the face of a big man, wet with rain, looking at me with eyes that seemed to have a glaze over them. Except for the eyes you see faces like that going into the pit at six in the morning or coming out of a steel mill or foundry where heavy work is done. I couldn't understand that glazed quality in his eyes. It wasn't the glassy stare of a drunken man or the wild, mad glare I saw once in the eyes of a woman in a fit of violence. I could only think of a man I once knew who had died of cancer. Over his eyes in the last days there was the same dull glaze, a far away, absent look as though behind the blank, outward film there was a secret flow of past events on which his mind was focused. It was this same look that I saw in the man on the road.

When at last he heard my horn, the man stepped very deliberately around the front of my car and came toward the inside door. The least I expected was that he would show surprise at an auto so dangerously close to him. But there was no emotion in him whatsoever. He walked slowly, deliberately, as though he had been expecting me and then bent his head down to see under the top of my car. "Kin yuh give me a lift, friend?" he asked me.

I saw his big, horse teeth chipped at the ends and stained brown by tobacco. His voice was high-pitched and nasal with the slurred, lilting drawl of the deep South. In West Virginia few of the town folk seem to speak that way. I judged he had been raised in the mountains.

I looked at his clothes—an old cap, a new blue work shirt, and dark trousers, all soaked through with rain. They didn't tell me much.

I must have been occupied with my thoughts about him for some time, because he asked me again. "Ahm goin' to Weston," he said. "Are you a-goin' thataway?"

As he said this, I looked into his eyes. The glaze had disappeared and now they were just ordinary eyes, brown and moist.

I didn't know what to reply. I didn't really want to take him in—the episode had unnerved me and I wanted to get away from the tunnel and from him too. But I saw him looking at me with a patient, almost humble glance. The rain was streaked on his face and he stood there asking for a ride and waiting in simple concentration for my answer. I was ashamed to tell him "no." Besides, I was curious. "Climb in," I said.

He sat down beside me, placing a brown paper package on his lap. We started out of the tunnel.

From Gauley to Weston is about a hundred miles of as difficult mountain driving as I know—a five-mile climb to the top of a hill, then five miles down, and then up another. The road twists like a snake on the run and for a good deal of it there is a jagged cliff on one side and a drop of a thousand feet or more on the other. The rain and the small rocks crumbling from the mountain sides and littering up the road made it very slow going. But in the four hours or so that it took for the trip I don't think my companion spoke to me half a dozen times.

I tried often to get him to talk. It was not that he wouldn't talk, it was rather that he didn't seem to hear me—as though as soon as he had spoken, he would slip down into that deep, secret recess within himself. He sat like a man dulled by morphine. My conversation, the rattle of the old car, the steady pour of rain were all a distant buzz—the meaningless, outside world that could not quite pierce the shell in which he seemed to be living.

As soon as we had started, I asked him how long he had been in the tunnel.

"Ah don' know," he replied. "A good tahm, ah reckon."

"What were you standing there for—to keep out of the rain?"

He didn't answer. I asked him again, speaking very loudly. He turned his head to me. "Excuse me, friend," he said, "did you say somethin'?"

"Yes," I answered. "Do you know I almost ran you over back in that tunnel?"

"No-o," he said. He spoke the word in that breathy way that is typical of mountain speech.

"Didn't you hear me yell to you?"

"No-o." He paused. "Ah reckon ah was thinkin'."

"Ah reckon you were," I thought to myself. "What's the matter, are you hard of hearing?" I asked him.

"No-o," he said, and turned his head away looking out front at the road.

I kept right after him. I didn't want him to go off again. I wanted somehow to get him to talk.

"Looking for work?"

"Yessuh."

He seemed to speak with an effort. It was not a difficulty of speech, it was something behind, in his mind, in his will to speak. It was as though he couldn't keep the touch between his world and mine. Yet when he did answer me, he spoke directly and coherently. I didn't know what to make of it. When he first came into the car I had been a little frightened. Now I only felt terribly curious and a little sorry.

"Do you have a trade?" I was glad to come to that question. You know a good deal about a man when you know what line of work he follows and it always leads to further conversation.

"Ah ginerally follows the mines," he said.

"Now," I thought, "we're getting somewhere."

But just then we hit a stretch of unpaved road where the mud was thick and the ruts were hard to follow. I had to stop talking and watch what I was doing. And when we came to paved road again, I had lost him.

I tried again to make him talk. It was no use. He didn't even hear me. Then, finally, his silence shamed me. He was a man lost somewhere within his own soul, only asking to be left alone. I felt wrong to keep thrusting at his privacy.

So for about four hours we drove in silence. For me those hours were almost unendurable. I have never seen such rigidity in a human being. He sat straight up in the car, his outward eye fixed on the road in front, his inward eye seeing nothing. He didn't know I was in the car, he didn't know he was in the car at all, he didn't feel the rain that kept sloshing in on him through the rent in the side curtains. He sat like a slab of moulded rock and only from his breathing could I be sure that he was alive. His breathing was heavy.

Only once in that long trip did he change his posture. That was when he was seized with a fit of coughing. It was a fierce, hacking cough that shook his big body from side to side and doubled him over like a child with the whooping cough. He was trying to cough something up—I could hear the phlegm in his chest—but he couldn't succeed. Inside him there was an ugly scraping sound as though cold metal were being rubbed on the bone of his ribs, and he kept spitting and shaking his head.

It took almost three minutes for the fit to subside. Then he turned around to me and said, "Excuse me, friend." That was all. He was quiet again.

I felt awful. There were times when I wanted to stop the car and tell him

to get out. I made up a dozen good excuses for cutting the trip short. But I couldn't do it. I was consumed by a curiosity to know what was wrong with the man. I hoped that before we parted, perhaps even as he got out of the car, he would tell me what it was or say something that would give me a clue.

I thought of the cough and wondered if it were T.B. I thought of cases of sleeping sickness I had seen and of a boxer who was punch drunk. But none of these things seemed to fit. Nothing physical seemed to explain this dark, terrible silence, this intense, all-exclusive absorption within himself.

Hour after hour of rain and darkness!

Once we passed the slate dump of a mine. The rain had made the surface burst into flame and the blue and red patches flickering in a kind of witch glow on a hill of black seemed to attract my companion. He turned his head to look at it, but he didn't speak, and I said nothing.

And again the silence and rain! Occasionally a mine tippie with the cold, drear, smoke smell of the dump and the oil lamps in the broken down shacks where the miners live. Then the black road again and the shapeless bulk of the mountains.

We reached Weston at about eight o'clock. I was tired and chilled and hungry. I stopped in front of a café and turned to the man.

"Ah reckon this is hit," he said.

"Yes," I answered. I was surprised. I had not expected him to know that we had arrived. Then I tried a final plunge. "Will you have a cup of coffee with me?"

"Yes," he replied, "thank you, friend."

The "thank you" told me a lot. I knew from the way he said it that he wanted the coffee but couldn't pay for it; that he had taken my offer to be one of hospitality and was grateful. I was happy I had asked him.

We went inside. For the first time since I had come upon him in the tunnel he seemed human. He didn't talk, but he didn't slip inside himself either. He just sat down at the counter and waited for his coffee. When it came, he drank it slowly, holding the cup in both hands as though to warm them.

When he had finished, I asked him if he wouldn't like a sandwich. He turned around to me and smiled. It was a very gentle, a very patient smile. His big, lumpy face seemed to light up with it and become understanding and sweet and gentle.

The smile shook me all through. It didn't warm me—it made me feel sick inside. It was like watching a corpse begin to stir. I wanted to cry out "My God, you poor man!"

Then he spoke to me. His face retained that smile and I could see the big, horse teeth stained by tobacco.

"You've bin right nice to me, friend, an' ah do appreciate it."

"That's all right," I mumbled.

He kept looking at me. I knew he was going to say something else and I was afraid of it.

"Would yuh do me a faveh?"

"Yes," I said.

He spoke softly. "Ah've got a letter here that ah done writ to mah woman, but ah can't write very good. Would you all be kind enough to write it ovah for me so it'd be proper like?"

"Yes," I said, "I'd be glad to."

"Ah kin tell you all know how to write real well," he said, and smiled.

"Yes."

He opened his blue shirt. Under his thick woolen underwear there was a sheet of paper fastened by a safety pin. He handed it to me. It was moist and warm and the damp odor of wet cloth and the slightly sour odor of his flesh clung to it.

I asked the counterman for a sheet of paper. He brought me one. This is the letter I copied. I put it down here in his own script.

My dere wife—

i am awritin this yere leta to tell you somethin i did not tell you afore i lef frum home. There is a cause to wy i am not able to get me any job at the mines. i told you hit was frum work abein slack. But this haint so.

Hit comes frum the time the mine was shut down an i worked in the tunel nere Gauley Bridge where the govinment is turnin the river inside the mounten. The mine supers say they wont hire any men war worked in thet tunel.

Hit all comes frum thet rock thet we all had to dril. Thet rock was silica and hit was most all of hit glass. The powder frum this glass has got into the lungs of all the men war worked in thet tunel thru their breathin. And this has given to all of us a sickness. The doctors writ it down for me. Hit is silicosis. Hit makes the lungs to git all scab like and then it stops the breathin.

Being as our home is a good peece frum town you aint heerd about Tom Prescott and Hansy MCCulloh having died two days back. But wen i heerd this i went to see the doctor.

The doctor says i hev got me thet sickness like Tom Prescott and thet is the reeson wy i am coughin sometime. My lungs is agittin scab like. There is in all ova a hondred men war have this death sickness frum the tunel. It is a turible plague becus the doctor says this wud not be so if the company had gave us masks to ware an put a right fan sistem in the tunel.

So i am agoin away becus the doctor says i will dead in about fore months.

i figger on gettin some work maybe in other parts. i will send you all my money till i caint work no mohr.

i did not want i should be a burdin upon you all at hum. So thet is wy i hev gone away.

i think wen you doan here frum me no mohr you orter go to your grandmaws up in the mountens at Kilney Run. You kin live there an she will take keer of you an the young one.

i hope you will be well an keep the young one out of the mines. Doan let him work there.

Doan think hard on me for agoin away and doan feel bad. But wen the young one is agrowed up you tell him wat the company has done to me.

i reckon after a bit you shud try to git you anotha man. You are a young woman yit.

Your loving husband,

Jack Pitckett.

When I handed him the copy of his letter, he read it over. It took him a long time. Finally he folded it up and pinned it to his undershirt. His big, lumpy face was sweet and gentle. "Thank you, friend," he said. Then, very softly, with his head hanging a little—"Ahm feelin' bad about this a-happenin' t'me. Mah wife was a good woman." He paused. And then, as though talking to himself, so low I could hardly hear it, "Ahm feelin' right bad."

As he said this, I looked into his face. Slowly the life was going out of his eyes. It seemed to recede and go deep into the sockets like the flame of a candle going into the night. Over the eyeballs came that dull glaze. I had lost him. He sat deep within himself in his sorrowful, dark absorption.

That was all. We sat together. In me there was only mute emotion—pity and love for him, and a cold, deep hatred for what had killed him.

Presently he arose. He did not speak. Nor did I. I saw his thick, broad back in the blue work shirt as he stood by the door. Then he moved out into the darkness and rain.

E. M. FORSTER (*b. 1879*) wrote novels in England before the first World War, but gained lasting fame by his classic treatment of the tragedy of Anglo-Indian social relations, *A Passage to India* (1924). *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) is a stimulating series of lectures on the novel as an art form. His fantastic but thought-provoking short stories, contained in *The Celestial Omnibus* (1911) and *The Eternal Moment* (1928), are among the best of our day. "The Machine Stops," for example, is a famous treatment of a theme nearly as old as the machine age itself.

THE MACHINE STOPS

I. THE AIR-SHIP

IMAGINE, if you can, a small room, hexagonal in shape, like the cell of a bee. It is lighted neither by window nor by lamp, yet it is filled with a soft radiance. There are no apertures for ventilation, yet the air is fresh. There are no musical instruments, and yet, at the moment that my meditation opens, this room is throbbing with melodious sounds. An arm-chair is in the center, by its side a reading-desk—that is all the furniture. And in the arm-chair there sits a swaddled lump of flesh—a woman, about five feet high, with a face as white as a fungus. It is to her that the little room belongs.

An electric bell rang.

The woman touched a switch and the music was silent.

"The Machine Stops," from *The Eternal Moment* by E. M. Forster. Copyright, 1928, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

"I suppose I must see who it is," she thought, and set her chair in motion. The chair, like the music, was worked by machinery, and it rolled her to the other side of the room, where the bell still rang importunately.

"Who is it?" she called. Her voice was irritable, for she had been interrupted often since the music began. She knew several thousand people; in certain directions human intercourse had advanced enormously.

But when she listened into the receiver, her white face wrinkled into smiles, and she said:

"Very well. Let us talk, I will isolate myself. I do not expect anything important will happen for the next five minutes—for I can give you fully five minutes, Kuno. Then I must deliver my lecture on 'Music during the Australian Period.'"

She touched the isolation knob, so that no one else could speak to her. Then she touched the lighting apparatus, and the little room was plunged into darkness.

"Be quick!" she called, her irritation returning. "Be quick, Kuno; here I am in the dark wasting my time."

But it was fully fifteen seconds before the round plate that she held in her hands began to glow. A faint blue light shot across it, darkening to purple, and presently she could see the image of her son, who lived on the other side of the earth, and he could see her.

"Kuno, how slow you are."

He smiled gravely.

"I really believe you enjoy dawdling."

"I have called you before, mother, but you were always busy or isolated. I have something particular to say."

"What is it, dearest boy? Be quick. Why could you not send it by pneumatic post?"

"Because I prefer saying such a thing. I want—"

"Well?"

"I want you to come and see me."

Vashti watched his face in the blue plate.

"But I can see you!" she exclaimed. "What more do you want?"

"I want to see you not through the Machine," said Kuno. "I want to speak to you not through the wearisome Machine."

"Oh, hush!" said his mother, vaguely shocked. "You mustn't say anything against the Machine."

"Why not?"

"One mustn't."

"You talk as if a god had made the Machine," cried the other. "I believe that you pray to it when you are unhappy. Men made it, do not forget that. Great men, but men. The Machine is much, but it is not everything. I see something like you in this plate, but I do not see you. I hear something like you through this telephone, but I do not hear you. That is why I want you to come. Come and stop with me. Pay me a visit, so that we can meet face to face, and talk about the hopes that are in my mind."

She replied that she could scarcely spare the time for a visit.

"The air-ship barely takes two days to fly between me and you."

"I dislike air-ships."

"Why?"

"I dislike seeing the horrible brown earth, and the sea, and the stars when it is dark. I get no ideas in an air-ship."

"I do not get them anywhere else."

"What kind of ideas can the air give you?"

He paused for an instant.

"Do you not know four big stars that form an oblong, and three stars close together in the middle of the oblong, and hanging from these stars, three other stars?"

"No, I do not. I dislike the stars. But did they give you an idea? How interesting; tell me."

"I had an idea that they were like a man."

"I do not understand."

"The four big stars are the man's shoulders and his knees. The three stars in the middle are like the belts that men wore once, and the three stars hanging are like a sword."

"A sword?"

"Men carried swords about with them, to kill animals and other men."

"It does not strike me as a very good idea, but it is certainly original. When did it come to you first?"

"In the air-ship—" He broke off, and she fancied that he looked sad. She could not be sure, for the Machine did not transmit *nuances* of expression. It only gave a general idea of people—an idea that was good enough for all practical purposes, Vashti thought. The imponderable bloom, declared by a discredited philosophy to be the actual essence of intercourse, was rightly ignored by the Machine, just as the imponderable bloom of the grape was ignored by the manufacturers of artificial fruit. Something "good enough" had long since been accepted by our race.

"The truth is," he continued, "that I want to see these stars again. They are curious stars. I want to see them not from the air-ship, but from the surface of the earth, as our ancestors did, thousands of years ago. I want to visit the surface of the earth."

She was shocked again.

"Mother, you must come, if only to explain to me what is the harm of visiting the surface of the earth."

"No harm," she replied, controlling herself. "But no advantage. The surface of the earth is only dust and mud, no life remains on it, and you would need a respirator, or the cold of the outer air would kill you. One dies immediately in the outer air."

"I know; of course I shall take all precautions."

"And besides—"

"Well?"

She considered, and chose her words with care. Her son had a queer temper, and she wished to dissuade him from the expedition.

"It is contrary to the spirit of the age," she asserted.

"Do you mean by that, contrary to the Machine?"

"In a sense, but—"

His image in the blue plate faded.

"Kunol!"

He had isolated himself.

For a moment Vashti felt lonely.

Then she generated the light, and the sight of her room, flooded with radiance and studded with electric buttons, revived her. There were buttons and switches everywhere—buttons to call for food, for music, for clothing. There was the hot-bath button, by pressure of which a basin of (imitation) marble rose out of the floor, filled to the brim with a warm deodorized liquid. There was the cold-bath button. There was the button that produced literature. And there were of course the buttons by which she communicated with her friends. The room, though it contained nothing, was in touch with all that she cared for in the world.

Vashti's next move was to turn off the isolation-switch, and all the accumulations of the last three minutes burst upon her. The room was filled with the noise of bells, and speaking-tubes. What was the new food like? Could she recommend it? Had she had any ideas lately? Might one tell her one's own ideas? Would she make an engagement to visit the public nurseries at an early date?—say this day month.

To most of these questions she replied with irritation—a growing quality in that accelerated age. She said that the new food was horrible. That she could not visit the public nurseries through press of engagements. That she had no ideas of her own but had just been told one—that four stars and three in the middle were like a man: she doubted there was much in it. Then she switched off her correspondents, for it was time to deliver her lecture on Australian music.

The clumsy system of public gatherings had been long since abandoned; neither Vashti nor her audience stirred from their rooms. Seated in her arm-chair she spoke, while they in their arm-chairs heard her, fairly well, and saw her, fairly well. She opened with a humorous account of music in the pre-Mongolian epoch, and went on to describe the great outburst of song that followed the Chinese conquest. Remote and primeval as were the methods of I-San-So and the Brisbane school, she yet felt (she said) that study of them might repay the musician of today: they had freshness; they had, above all, ideas.

Her lecture, which lasted ten minutes, was well received, and at its conclusion she and many of her audience listened to a lecture on the sea; there were ideas to be got from the sea; the speaker had donned a respirator and visited it lately. Then she fed, talked to many friends, had a bath, talked again, and summoned her bed.

The bed was not to her liking. It was too large, and she had a feeling for a

small bed. Complaint was useless, for beds were of the same dimension all over the world, and to have had an alternative size would have involved vast alterations in the Machine. Vashti isolated herself—it was necessary, for neither day nor night existed under the ground—and reviewed all that had happened since she had summoned the bed last. Ideas? Scarcely any. Events—was Kuno's invitation an event?

By her side, on the little reading-desk, was a survival from the ages of litter—one book. This was the Book of the Machine. In it were instructions against every possible contingency. If she was hot or cold or dyspeptic or at loss for a word, she went to the book, and it told her which button to press. The Central Committee published it. In accordance with a growing habit, it was richly bound.

Sitting up in the bed, she took it reverently in her hands. She glanced round the glowing room as if someone might be watching her. Then, half ashamed, half joyful, she murmured "O Machine! O Machine!" and raised the volume to her lips. Thrice she kissed it, thrice inclined her head, thrice she felt the delirium of acquiescence. Her ritual performed, she turned to page 1367, which gave the times of the departure of the air-ships from the island in the southern hemisphere, under whose soil she lived, to the island in the northern hemisphere, whereunder lived her son.

She thought, "I have not the time."

She made the room dark and slept; she awoke and made the room light; she ate and exchanged ideas with her friends, and listened to music and attended lectures; she made the room dark and slept. Above her, beneath her, and around her, the Machine hummed eternally; she did not notice the noise, for she had been born with it in her ears. The earth, carrying her, hummed as it sped through silence, turning her now to the invisible sun, now to the invisible stars. She awoke and made the room light.

"Kuno!"

"I will not talk to you," he answered, "until you come."

"Have you been on the surface of the earth since we spoke last?"

His image faded.

Again she consulted the book. She became very nervous and lay back in her chair palpitating. Think of her as without teeth or hair. Presently she directed the chair to the wall, and pressed an unfamiliar button. The wall swung apart slowly. Through the opening she saw a tunnel that curved slightly, so that its goal was not visible. Should she go to see her son, here was the beginning of the journey.

Of course she knew all about the communication-system. There was nothing mysterious in it. She would summon a car and it would fly with her down the tunnel until it reached the lift that communicated with the air-ship station: the system had been in use for many, many years, long before the universal establishment of the Machine. And of course she had studied the civilization that had immediately preceded her own—the civilization that had mistaken the functions of the system, and had used it for bringing people to things, instead of for bringing things to people. Those funny old days, when

men went for change of air instead of changing the air in their rooms! And yet—she was frightened of the tunnel: she had not seen it since her last child was born. It curved—but not quite as she remembered; it was brilliant—but not quite as brilliant as a lecturer had suggested. Vashti was seized with the terrors of direct experience. She shrank back into the room, and the wall closed up again.

“Kuno,” she said, “I cannot come to see you. I am not well.”

Immediately an enormous apparatus fell on to her out of the ceiling, a thermometer was automatically inserted between her lips, a stethoscope was automatically laid upon her heart. She lay powerless. Cool pads soothed her forehead. Kuno had telegraphed to her doctor.

So the human passions still blundered up and down in the Machine. Vashti drank the medicine that the doctor projected into her mouth, and the machinery retired into the ceiling. The voice of Kuno was heard asking how she felt.

“Better.” Then with irritation: “But why do you not come to me instead?”

“Because I cannot leave this place.”

“Why?”

“Because, any moment, something tremendous may happen.”

“Have you been on the surface of the earth yet?”

“Not yet.”

“Then what is it?”

“I will not tell you through the Machine.”

She resumed her life.

But she thought of Kuno as a baby, his birth, his removal to the public nurseries, her one visit to him there, his visits to her—visits which stopped when the Machine had assigned him a room on the other side of the earth. “Parents, duties of,” said the book of the Machine, “cease at the moment of birth. P. 422327483.” True, but there was something special about Kuno—indeed there had been something special about all her children—and, after all, she must brave the journey if he desired it. And “something tremendous might happen.” What did that mean? The nonsense of a youthful man, no doubt, but she must go. Again she pressed the unfamiliar button, again the wall swung back, and she saw the tunnel that curved out of sight. Claspings the Book, she rose, tottered on to the platform, and summoned the car. Her room closed behind her: the journey to the northern hemisphere had begun.

Of course it was perfectly easy. The car approached and in it she found arm-chairs exactly like her own. When she signaled, it stopped, and she tottered into the lift. One other passenger was in the lift, the first fellow creature she had seen face to face for months. Few traveled in these days, for, thanks to the advance of science, the earth was exactly alike all over. Rapid intercourse, from which the previous civilization had hoped so much, had ended by defeating itself. What was the good of going to Pekin when it was just like Shrewsbury? Why return to Shrewsbury when it would be just like Pekin? Men seldom moved their bodies; all unrest was concentrated in the soul.

The air-ship service was a relic from the former age. It was kept up, be

cause it was easier to keep it up than to stop it or to diminish it, but it now far exceeded the wants of the population. Vessel after vessel would rise from the vomitories of Rye or of Christchurch (I use the antique names), would sail into the crowded sky, and would draw up at the wharves of the south—empty. So nicely adjusted was the system, so independent of meteorology, that the sky, whether calm or cloudy, resembled a vast kaleidoscope whereon the same patterns periodically recurred. The ship on which Vashti sailed started now at sunset, now at dawn. But always, as it passed above Rheims, it would neighbor the ship that served between Helsingfors and the Brazils, and, every third time it surmounted the Alps, the fleet of Palermo would cross its track behind. Night and day, wind and storm, tide and earthquake, impeded man no longer. He had harnessed Leviathan. All the old literature, with its praise of Nature, and its fear of Nature, rang false as the prattle of a child.

Yet as Vashti saw the vast flank of the ship, stained with exposure to the outer air, her horror of direct experience returned. It was not quite like the air-ship in the cinematophote. For one thing it smelt—not strongly or unpleasantly, but it did smell, and with her eyes shut she should have known that a new thing was close to her. Then she had to walk to it from the lift, had to submit to glances from the other passengers. The man in front dropped his Book—no great matter, but it disquieted them all. In the rooms, if the Book was dropped, the floor raised it mechanically, but the gangway to the air-ship was not so prepared, and the sacred volume lay motionless. They stopped—the thing was unforeseen—and the man, instead of picking up his property, felt the muscles of his arm to see how they had failed him. Then someone actually said with direct utterance: “We shall be late”—and they trooped on board, Vashti treading on the pages as she did so.

Inside, her anxiety increased. The arrangements were old-fashioned and rough. There was even a female attendant, to whom she would have to announce her wants during the voyage. Of course a revolving platform ran the length of the boat, but she was expected to walk from it to her cabin. Some cabins were better than others, and she did not get the best. She thought the attendant had been unfair, and spasms of rage shook her. The glass valves had closed, she could not go back. She saw, at the end of the vestibule, the lift in which she had ascended going quietly up and down, empty. Beneath those corridors of shining tiles were rooms, tier below tier, reaching far into the earth, and in each room there sat a human being, eating, or sleeping, or producing ideas. And buried deep in the hive was her own room. Vashti was afraid.

“O Machine! O Machine!” she murmured, and caressed her Book, and was comforted.

Then the sides of the vestibule seemed to melt together, as do the passages that we see in dreams, the lift vanished, the Book that had been dropped slid to the left and vanished, polished tiles rushed by like a stream of water, there was a slight jar, and the air-ship, issuing from its tunnel, soared above the waters of a tropical ocean.

It was night. For a moment she saw the coast of Sumatra edged by the phosphorescence of waves, and crowned by lighthouses, still sending forth their disregarded beams. They also vanished, and only the stars distracted her. They were not motionless, but swayed to and fro above her head, thronging out of one skylight into another, as if the universe and not the air-ship was careening. And, as often happens on clear nights, they seemed now to be in perspective, now on a plane; now piled tier beyond tier into the infinite heavens, now concealing infinity, a roof limiting for ever the visions of men. In either case they seemed intolerable. "Are we to travel in the dark?" called the passengers angrily, and the attendant, who had been careless, generated the light, and pulled down the blinds of pliable metal. When the air-ships had been built, the desire to look direct at things still lingered in the world. Hence the extraordinary number of skylights and windows, and the proportionate discomfort to those who were civilized and refined. Even in Vashti's cabin one star peeped through a flaw in the blind, and after a few hours' uneasy slumber, she was disturbed by an unfamiliar glow, which was the dawn.

Quick as the ship had sped westwards, the earth had rolled eastwards quicker still, and had dragged back Vashti and her companions towards the sun. Science could prolong the night, but only for a little, and those high hopes of neutralizing the earth's diurnal revolution had passed, together with hopes that were possibly higher. To "keep pace with the sun," or even to outstrip it, had been the aim of the civilization preceding this. Racing aeroplanes had been built for the purpose, capable of enormous speed, and steered by the greatest intellects of the epoch. Round the globe they went, round and round, westward, westward, round and round, amidst humanity's applause. In vain. The globe went eastward quicker still, horrible accidents occurred, and the Committee of the Machine, at the time rising into prominence, declared the pursuit illegal, unmechanical, and punishable by Homelessness.

Of Homelessness more will be said later.

Doubtless the Committee was right. Yet the attempt to "defeat the sun" aroused the last common interest that our race experienced about the heavenly bodies, or indeed about anything. It was the last time that men were compacted by thinking of a power outside the world. The sun had conquered, yet it was the end of his spiritual dominion. Dawn, midday, twilight, the zodiacal path, touched neither men's lives nor their hearts, and science retreated into the ground, to concentrate herself upon problems that she was certain of solving.

So when Vashti found her cabin invaded by a rosy finger of light, she was annoyed, and tried to adjust the blind. But the blind flew up altogether, and she saw through the skylight small pink clouds, swaying against a background of blue, and as the sun crept higher, its radiance entered direct, brimming down the wall, like a golden sea. It rose and fell with the air-ship's motion, just as waves rise and fall, but it advanced steadily, as a tide advances. Unless she was careful, it would strike her face. A spasm of horror shook her and she rang for the attendant. The attendant too was horrified, but she

could do nothing; it was not her place to mend the blind. She could only suggest that the lady should change her cabin, which she accordingly prepared to do.

People were almost exactly alike all over the world, but the attendant of the air-ship, perhaps owing to her exceptional duties, had grown a little out of the common. She had often to address passengers with direct speech, and this had given her a certain roughness and originality of manner. When Vashti swerved away from the sunbeams with a cry, she behaved barbarically—she put out her hand to steady her.

"How dare you!" exclaimed the passenger. "You forget yourself!"

The woman was confused, and apologized for not having let her fall. People never touched one another. The custom had become obsolete, owing to the Machine.

"Where are we now?" asked Vashti haughtily.

"We are over Asia," said the attendant, anxious to be polite.

"Asia?"

"You must excuse my common way of speaking. I have got into the habit of calling places over which I pass by their unmechanical names."

"Oh, I remember Asia. The Mongols came from it."

"Beneath us, in the open air, stood a city that was once called Simla."

"Have you ever heard of the Mongols and of the Brisbane school?"

"No."

"Brisbane also stood in the open air."

"Those mountains to the right—let me show you them." She pushed back a metal blind. The main chain of the Himalayas was revealed. "They were once called the Roof of the World, those mountains."

"What a foolish name!"

"You must remember that, before the dawn of civilization, they seemed to be an impenetrable wall that touched the stars. It was supposed that no one but the gods could exist above their summits. How we have advanced, thanks to the Machine!"

"How we have advanced, thanks to the Machine!" said Vashti.

"How we have advanced, thanks to the Machine!" echoed the passenger who had dropped his Book the night before, and who was standing in the passage.

"And that white stuff in the cracks?—what is it?"

"I have forgotten its name."

"Cover the window, please. These mountains give me no ideas."

The northern aspect of the Himalayas was in deep shadow: on the Indian slope the sun had just prevailed. The forests had been destroyed during the literature epoch for the purpose of making newspaper-pulp, but the snows were awakening to their morning glory, and clouds still hung on the breasts of Kinchinjunga. In the plain were seen the ruins of cities, with diminished rivers creeping by their walls, and by the sides of these were sometimes the signs of vomitories, marking the cities of today. Over the whole prospect air-ships rushed, crossing and intercrossing with incredible aplomb, and ris-

ing nonchalantly when they desired to escape the perturbations of the lower atmosphere and to traverse the Roof of the World.

"We have indeed advanced, thanks to the Machine," repeated the attendant, and hid the Himalayas behind a metal blind.

The day dragged wearily forward. The passengers sat each in his cabin, avoiding one another with an almost physical repulsion and longing to be once more under the surface of the earth. There were eight or ten of them, mostly young males, sent out from the public nurseries to inhabit the rooms of those who had died in various parts of the earth. The man who had dropped his Book was on the homeward journey. He had been sent to Sumatra for the purpose of propagating the race. Vashti alone was traveling by her private will.

At midday she took a second glance at the earth. The air-ship was crossing another range of mountains, but she could see little, owing to clouds. Masses of black rock hovered below her, and merged indistinctly into gray. Their shapes were fantastic; one of them resembled a prostrate man.

"No ideas here," murmured Vashti, and hid the Caucasus behind a metal blind.

In the evening she looked again. They were crossing a golden sea, in which lay many small islands and one peninsula.

She repeated, "No ideas here," and hid Greece behind a metal blind.

2. THE MENDING APPARATUS

By a vestibule, by a lift, by a tubular railway, by a platform, by a sliding door—by reversing all the steps of her departure did Vashti arrive at her son's room, which exactly resembled her own. She might well declare that the visit was superfluous. The buttons, the knobs, the reading-desk with the Book, the temperature, the atmosphere, the illumination—all were exactly the same. And if Kuno himself, flesh of her flesh, stood close beside her at last, what profit was there in that? She was too well-bred to shake him by the hand.

Averting her eyes, she spoke as follows:

"Here I am. I have had the most terrible journey and greatly retarded the development of my soul. It is not worth it, Kuno, it is not worth it. My time is too precious. The sunlight almost touched me, and I have met with the rudest people. I can only stop a few minutes. Say what you want to say, and then I must return."

"I have been threatened with Homelessness," said Kuno.

She looked at him now.

"I have been threatened with Homelessness, and I could not tell you such a thing through the Machine."

Homelessness means death. The victim is exposed to the air, which kills him.

"I have been outside since I spoke to you last. The tremendous thing has happened, and they have discovered me."

"But why shouldn't you go outside!" she exclaimed. "It is perfectly legal,

perfectly mechanical, to visit the surface of the earth. I have lately been to a lecture on the sea; there is no objection to that; one simply summons a respirator and gets an Egression-permit. It is not the kind of thing that spiritually-minded people do, and I begged you not to do it, but there is no legal objection to it."

"I did not get an Egression-permit."

"Then how did you get out?"

"I found out a way of my own."

The phrase conveyed no meaning to her, and he had to repeat it.

"A way of your own?" she whispered. "But that would be wrong."

"Why?"

The question shocked her beyond measure.

"You are beginning to worship the Machine," he said coldly. "You think it irreligious of me to have found out a way of my own. It was just what the Committee thought, when they threatened me with Homelessness."

At this she grew angry. "I worship nothing!" she cried. "I am most advanced. I don't think you irreligious, for there is no such thing as religion left. All the fear and the superstition that existed once have been destroyed by the Machine. I only meant that to find out a way of your own was— Besides, there is no new way out."

"So it is always supposed."

"Except through the vomitories, for which one must have an Egression-permit, it is impossible to get out. The Book says so."

"Well, the Book's wrong, for I have been out on my feet."

For Kuno was possessed of a certain physical strength.

By these days it was a demerit to be muscular. Each infant was examined at birth, and all who promised undue strength were destroyed. Humanitarians may protest, but it would have been no true kindness to let an athlete live; he would never have been happy in that state of life to which the Machine had called him; he would have yearned for trees to climb, rivers to bathe in, meadows and hills against which he might measure his body. Man must be adapted to his surroundings, must he not? In the dawn of the world our weakly must be exposed on Mount Taygetus, in its twilight our strong will suffer euthanasia, that the Machine may progress, that the Machine may progress, that the Machine may progress eternally.

"You know that we have lost the sense of space. We say 'space is annihilated,' but we have annihilated not space, but the sense thereof. We have lost a part of ourselves. I determined to recover it, and I began by walking up and down the platform of the railway outside my room. Up and down, until I was tired, and so did recapture the meaning of 'Near' and 'Far.' 'Near' is a place to which I can get quickly *on my feet*, not a place to which the train or the air-ship will take me quickly. 'Far' is a place to which I cannot get quickly on my feet; the vomitory is 'far,' though I could be there in thirty-eight seconds by summoning the train. Man is the measure. That was my first lesson. Man's feet are the measure for distance, his hands are the measure for ownership, his body is the measure for all that is lovable and desirable

and strong. Then I went further: it was then that I called to you for the first time, and you would not come.

"This city, as you know, is built deep beneath the surface of the earth, with only the vomitories protruding. Having paced the platform outside my own room, I took the lift to the next platform and paced that also, and so with each in turn, until I came to the topmost, above which begins the earth. All the platforms were exactly alike, and all that I gained by visiting them was to develop my sense of space and my muscles. I think I should have been content with this—it is not a little thing—but as I walked and brooded, it occurred to me that our cities had been built in the days when men still breathed the outer air, and that there had been ventilation shafts for the workmen. I could think of nothing but these ventilation shafts. Had they been destroyed by all the food-tubes and medicine-tubes and music-tubes that the Machine has evolved lately? Or did traces of them remain? One thing was certain. If I came upon them anywhere, it would be in the railway-tunnels of the topmost story. Everywhere else, all space was accounted for.

"I am telling my story quickly, but don't think that I was not a coward or that your answers never depressed me. It is not the proper thing, it is not mechanical, it is not decent to walk along a railway-tunnel. I did not fear that I might tread upon a live rail and be killed. I feared something far more intangible—doing what was not contemplated by the Machine. Then I said to myself, 'Man is the measure,' and I went, and after many visits I found an opening.

"The tunnels, of course, were lighted. Everything is light, artificial light; darkness is the exception. So when I saw a black gap in the tiles, I knew that it was an exception, and rejoiced. I put in my arm—I could put in no more at first—and waved it round and round in ecstasy. I loosened another tile, and put in my head, and shouted into the darkness: 'I am coming, I shall do it yet,' and my voice reverberated down endless passages. I seemed to hear the spirits of those dead workmen who had returned each evening to the starlight and to their wives, and all the generations who had lived in the open air called back to me, 'You will do it yet, you are coming.'"

He paused, and, absurd as he was, his last words moved her. For Kuno had lately asked to be a father, and his request had been refused by the Committee. His was not a type that the Machine desired to hand on.

"Then a train passed. It brushed by me, but I thrust my head and arms into the hole. I had done enough for one day, so I crawled back to the platform, went down in the lift, and summoned my bed. Ah, what dreams! And again I called you, and again you refused."

She shook her head and said:

"Don't. Don't talk of these terrible things. You make me miserable. You are throwing civilization away."

"But I had got back the sense of space and a man cannot rest then. I determined to get in at the hole and climb the shaft. And so I exercised my arms. Day after day I went through ridiculous movements, until my flesh ached

and I could hang by my hands and hold the pillow of my bed outstretched for many minutes. Then I summoned a respirator, and started.

"It was easy at first. The mortar had somehow rotted, and I soon pushed some more tiles in, and clambered after them into the darkness, and the spirits of the dead comforted me. I don't know what I mean by that. I just say what I felt. I felt, for the first time, that a protest had been lodged against corruption, and that even as the dead were comforting me, so I was comforting the unborn. I felt that humanity existed, and that it existed without clothes. How can I possibly explain this? It was naked, humanity seemed naked, and all these tubes and buttons and machineries neither came into the world with us, nor will they follow us out, nor do they matter supremely while we are here. Had I been strong, I would have torn off every garment I had, and gone out into the outer air unswaddled. But this is not for me, nor perhaps for my generation. I climbed with my respirator and my hygienic clothes and my dietetic tabloids! Better thus than not at all.

"There was a ladder, made of some primeval metal. The light from the railway fell upon its lowest rungs, and I saw that it led straight upwards out of the rubble at the bottom of the shaft. Perhaps our ancestors ran up and down it a dozen times daily, in their building. As I climbed, the rough edges cut through my gloves so that my hands bled. The light helped me for a little, and then came darkness and, worse still, silence which pierced my ears like a sword. The Machine hums! Did you know that? Its hum penetrates our blood, and may even guide our thoughts. Who knows! I was getting beyond its power. Then I thought: 'This silence means that I am doing wrong.' But I heard voices in the silence, and again they strengthened me." He laughed. "I had need of them. The next moment I cracked my head against something."

She sighed.

"I had reached one of those pneumatic stoppers that defend us from the outer air. You may have noticed them on the air-ship. Pitch dark, my feet on the rungs of an invisible ladder, my hands cut; I cannot explain how I lived through this part, but the voices still comforted me, and I felt for fastenings. The stopper, I suppose, was about eight feet across. I passed my hand over it as far as I could reach. It was perfectly smooth. I felt it almost to the center. Not quite to the center, for my arm was too short. Then the voice said: 'Jump. It is worth it. There may be a handle in the center, and you may catch hold of it and so come to us your own way. And if there is no handle, so that you may fall and are dashed to pieces—it is still worth it: you will still come to us your own way.' So I jumped. There was a handle, and—"

He paused. Tears gathered in his mother's eyes. She knew that he was fated. If he did not die today he would die tomorrow. There was not room for such a person in the world. And with her pity disgust mingled. She was ashamed at having borne such a son, she who had always been so respectable and so full of ideas. Was he really the little boy to whom she had taught the use of his stops and buttons, and to whom she had given his first lessons in

the Book? The very hair that disfigured his lip showed that he was reverting to some savage type. On atavism the Machine can have no mercy.

"There was a handle, and I did catch it. I hung tranced over the darkness and heard the hum of these workings as the last whisper in a dying dream. All the things I had cared about and all the people I had spoken to through tubes appeared infinitely little. Meanwhile the handle revolved. My weight had set something in motion and I span slowly, and then—

"I cannot describe it. I was lying with my face to the sunshine. Blood poured from my nose and ears and I heard a tremendous roaring. The stopper, with me clinging to it, had simply been blown out of the earth, and the air that we make down here was escaping through the vent into the air above. It burst up like a fountain. I crawled back to it—for the upper air hurts—and, as it were, I took great sips from the edge. My respirator had flown goodness knows where, my clothes were torn. I just lay with my lips close to the hole, and I sipped until the bleeding stopped. You can imagine nothing so curious. This hollow in the grass—I will speak of it in a minute,—the sun shining into it, not brilliantly but through marbled clouds,—the peace, the nonchalance, the sense of space, and, brushing my cheek, the roaring fountain of our artificial air! Soon I spied my respirator, bobbing up and down in the current high above my head, and higher still were many air-ships. But no one ever looks out of air-ships, and in my case they could not have picked me up. There I was, stranded. The sun shone a little way down the shaft, and revealed the topmost rung of the ladder, but it was hopeless trying to reach it. I should either have been tossed up again by the escape, or else have fallen in, and died. I could only lie on the grass, sipping and sipping, and from time to time glancing around me.

"I knew that I was in Wessex, for I had taken care to go to a lecture on the subject before starting. Wessex lies above the room in which we are talking now. It was once an important state. Its kings held all the southern coast from the Andredswald to Cornwall, while the Wansdyke protected them on the north, running over the high ground. The lecturer was only concerned with the rise of Wessex, so I do not know how long it remained an international power, nor would the knowledge have assisted me. To tell the truth I could do nothing but laugh, during this part. There was I, with a pneumatic stopper by my side and a respirator bobbing over my head, imprisoned, all three of us, in a grass-grown hollow that was edged with fern."

Then he grew grave again.

"Lucky for me that it was a hollow. For the air began to fall back into it and to fill it as water fills a bowl. I could crawl about. Presently I stood. I breathed a mixture, in which the air that hurts predominated whenever I tried to climb the sides. This was not so bad. I had not lost my tabloids and remained ridiculously cheerful, and as for the Machine, I forgot about it altogether. My one aim now was to get to the top, where the ferns were, and to view whatever objects lay beyond.

"I rushed the slope. The new air was still too bitter for me and I came rolling back, after a momentary vision of something gray. The sun grew very

feeble, and I remembered that he was in Scorpio—I had been to a lecture on that too. If the sun is in Scorpio and you are in Wessex, it means that you must be as quick as you can, or it will get too dark. (This is the first bit of useful information I have ever got from a lecture, and I expect it will be the last.) It made me try frantically to breathe the new air, and to advance as far as I dared out of my pond. The hollow filled so slowly. At times I thought that the fountain played with less vigor. My respirator seemed to dance nearer the earth; the roar was decreasing."

He broke off.

"I don't think this is interesting you. The rest will interest you even less. There are no ideas in it, and I wish that I had not troubled you to come. We are too different, mother."

She told him to continue.

"It was evening before I climbed the bank. The sun had very nearly slipped out of the sky by this time, and I could not get a good view. You, who have just crossed the Roof of the World, will not want to hear an account of the little hills that I saw—low colorless hills. But to me they were living and the turf that covered them was a skin, under which their muscles rippled, and I felt that those hills had called with incalculable force to men in the past, and that men had loved them. Now they sleep—perhaps for ever. They commune with humanity in dreams. Happy the man, happy the woman, who awakes the hills of Wessex. For though they sleep, they will never die."

His voice rose passionately.

"Cannot you see, cannot all your lecturers see, that it is we who are dying, and that down here the only thing that really lives is the Machine? We created the Machine, to do our will, but we cannot make it do our will now. It has robbed us of the sense of space and of the sense of touch, it has blurred every human relation and narrowed down love to a carnal act, it has paralyzed our bodies and our wills, and now it compels us to worship it. The Machine develops—but not on our lines. The Machine proceeds—but not to our goal. We only exist as the blood corpuscles that course through its arteries, and if it could work without us, it would let us die. Oh, I have no remedy—or, at least, only one—to tell men again and again that I have seen the hills of Wessex as Aelfrid saw them when he overthrew the Danes.

"So the sun set. I forgot to mention that a belt of mist lay between my hill and other hills, and that it was the color of pearl."

He broke off for the second time.

"Go on," said his mother wearily.

He shook his head.

"Go on. Nothing that you say can distress me now. I am hardened."

"I had meant to tell you the rest, but I cannot: I know that I cannot: good-bye."

Vashti stood irresolute. All her nerves were tingling with his blasphemies. But she was also inquisitive.

"This is unfair," she complained. "You have called me across the world to

hear your story, and hear it I will. Tell me—as briefly as possible, for this is a disastrous waste of time—tell me how you returned to civilization.”

“Oh,—that!” he said, starting. “You would like to hear about civilization. Certainly. Had I got to where my respirator fell down?”

“No—but I understand everything now. You put on your respirator, and managed to walk along the surface of the earth to a vomitory, and there your conduct was reported to the Central Committee.”

“By no means.”

He passed his hand over his forehead, as if dispelling some strong impression. Then, resuming his narrative, he warmed to it again.

“My respirator fell about sunset. I had mentioned that the fountain seemed feebler, had I not?”

“Yes.”

“About sunset, it let the respirator fall. As I said, I had entirely forgotten about the Machine, and I paid no great attention at the time, being occupied with other things. I had my pool of air, into which I could dip when the outer keenness became intolerable, and which would possibly remain for days, provided that no wind sprang up to disperse it. Not until it was too late, did I realize what the stoppage of the escape implied. You see—the gap in the tunnel had been mended; the Mending Apparatus, the Mending Apparatus, was after me.

“One other warning I had, but I neglected it. The sky at night was clearer than it had been in the day, and the moon, which was about half the sky behind the sun, shone into the dell at moments quite brightly. I was in my usual place—on the boundary between the two atmospheres—when I thought I saw something dark move across the bottom of the dell, and vanish into the shaft. In my folly, I ran down. I bent over and listened, and I thought I heard a faint scraping noise in the depths.

“At this—but it was too late—I took alarm. I determined to put on my respirator and to walk right out of the dell. But my respirator had gone. I knew exactly where it had fallen—between the stopper and the aperture—and I could even feel the mark that it had made in the turf. It had gone, and I realized that something evil was at work, and I had better escape to the other air, and, if I must die, die running towards the cloud that had been the color of a pearl. I never started. Out of the shaft—it is too horrible. A worm, a long white worm, had crawled out of the shaft and was gliding over the moonlit grass.

“I screamed. I did everything that I should not have done, I stamped upon the creature instead of flying from it, and it at once curled round the ankle. Then we fought. The worm let me run all over the dell, but edged up my leg as I ran. ‘Help!’ I cried. (That part is too awful. It belongs to the part that you will never know.) ‘Help!’ I cried. (Why cannot we suffer in silence?) ‘Help!’ I cried. Then my feet were wound together, I fell, I was dragged away from the dear ferns and the living hills, and past the great metal stopper (I can tell you this part), and I thought it might save me again if I

caught hold of the handle. It also was enwrapped, it also. Oh, the whole dell was full of the things. They were searching it in all directions, they were denuding it, and the white snouts of others peeped out of the hole, ready if needed. Everything that could be moved they brought—brushwood, bundles of fern, everything, and down we all went intertwined into hell. The last things that I saw, ere the stopper closed after us, were certain stars, and I felt that a man of my sort lived in the sky. For I did fight, I fought till the very end, and it was only my head hitting against the ladder that quieted me. I woke up in this room. The worms had vanished. I was surrounded by artificial air, artificial light, artificial peace, and my friends were calling to me down speaking-tubes to know whether I had come across any new ideas lately."

Here his story ended. Discussion of it was impossible, and Vashti turned to go.

"It will end in Homelessness," she said quietly.

"I wish it would," retorted Kuno.

"The Machine has been most merciful."

"I prefer the mercy of God."

"By that superstitious phrase, do you mean that you could live in the outer air?"

"Yes."

"Have you ever seen, round the vomitories, the bones of those who were extruded after the Great Rebellion?"

"Yes."

"They were left where they perished for our edification. A few crawled away, but they perished, too—who can doubt it? And so with the Homeless of our own day. The surface of the earth supports life no longer."

"Indeed."

"Ferns and a little grass may survive, but all higher forms have perished. Has any air-ship detected them?"

"No."

"Has any lecturer dealt with them?"

"No."

"Then why this obstinacy?"

"Because I have seen them," he exploded.

"Seen *what*?"

"Because I have seen her in the twilight—because she came to my help when I called—because she, too, was entangled by the worms, and, luckier than I, was killed by one of them piercing her throat."

He was mad. Vashti departed, nor, in the troubles that followed, did she ever see his face again.

3. THE HOMELESS

During the years that followed Kuno's escapade, two important developments took place in the Machine. On the surface they were revolutionary, but

in either case men's minds had been prepared beforehand, and they did but express tendencies that were latent already.

The first of these was the abolition of respirators.

Advanced thinkers, like Vashti, had always held it foolish to visit the surface of the earth. Air-ships might be necessary, but what was the good of going out for mere curiosity and crawling along for a mile or two in a terrestrial motor? The habit was vulgar and perhaps faintly improper: it was unproductive of ideas, and had no connection with the habits that really mattered. So respirators were abolished, and with them, of course, the terrestrial motors, and except for a few lecturers, who complained that they were debarred access to their subject-matter, the development was accepted quietly. Those who still wanted to know what the earth was like had after all only to listen to some gramophone, or to look into some cinematophote. And even the lecturers acquiesced when they found that a lecture on the sea was none the less stimulating when compiled out of other lectures that had already been delivered on the same subject. "Beware of first-hand ideas!" exclaimed one of the most advanced of them. "First-hand ideas do not really exist. They are but the physical impressions produced by love and fear, and on this gross foundation who could erect a philosophy? Let your ideas be second-hand, and if possible tenth-hand, for then they will be far removed from that disturbing element—direct observation. Do not learn anything about this subject of mine—the French Revolution. Learn instead what I think that Enicharmon thought Urizen thought Gutch thought Ho-Yung thought Chi-Bo-Sing thought Lafcadio Hearn thought Carlyle thought Mirabeau said about the French Revolution. Through the medium of these eight great minds, the blood that was shed at Paris and the windows that were broken at Versailles will be clarified to an idea which you may employ most profitably in your daily lives. But be sure that the intermediates are many and varied, for in history one authority exists to counteract another. Urizen must counteract the skepticism of Ho-Yung and Enicharmon, I must myself counteract the impetuosity of Gutch. You who listen to me are in a better position to judge about the French Revolution than I am. Your descendants will be even in a better position than you, for they will learn what you think I think, and yet another intermediate will be added to the chain. And in time"—his voice rose—"there will come a generation that has got beyond facts, beyond impressions, a generation absolutely colorless, a generation

‘seraphically free
From taint of personality,’

which will see the French Revolution not as it happened, nor as they would like it to have happened, but as it would have happened, had it taken place in the days of the Machine."

Tremendous applause greeted this lecture, which did but voice a feeling already latent in the minds of men—a feeling that terrestrial facts must be ignored, and that the abolition of respirators was a positive gain. It was even suggested that air-ships should be abolished too. This was not done, because

air-ships had somehow worked themselves into the Machine's system. But year by year they were used less, and mentioned less by thoughtful men.

The second great development was the reestablishment of religion.

This, too, had been voiced in the celebrated lecture. No one could mistake the reverent tone in which the peroration had concluded, and it awakened a responsive echo in the heart of each. Those who had long worshiped silently, now began to talk. They described the strange feeling of peace that came over them when they handled the Book of the Machine, the pleasure that it was to repeat certain numerals out of it, however little meaning those numerals conveyed to the outward ear, the ecstasy of touching a button, however unimportant, or of ringing an electric bell, however superfluously.

"The Machine," they exclaimed, "feeds us and clothes us and houses us; through it we speak to one another, through it we see one another, in it we have our being. The Machine is the friend of ideas and the enemy of superstition: the Machine is omnipotent, eternal; blessed is the Machine." And before long this allocution was printed on the first page of the Book, and in subsequent editions the ritual swelled into a complicated system of praise and prayer. The word "religion" was sedulously avoided, and in theory the Machine was still the creation and the implement of man. But in practice all, save a few retrogrades, worshiped it as divine. Nor was it worshiped in unity. One believer would be chiefly impressed by the blue optic plates, through which he saw other believers; another by the mending apparatus, which sinful Kuno had compared to worms; another by the lifts, another by the Book. And each would pray to this or to that, and ask it to intercede for him with the Machine as a whole. Persecution—that also was present. It did not break out, for reasons that will be set forward shortly. But it was latent, and all who did not accept the minimum known as "undenominational Mechanism" lived in danger of Homelessness, which means death, as we know.

To attribute these two great developments to the Central Committee, is to take a very narrow view of civilization. The Central Committee announced the developments, it is true, but they were no more the cause of them than were the kings of the imperialistic period the cause of war. Rather did they yield to some invincible pressure, which came no one knew whither, and which, when gratified, was succeeded by some new pressure equally invincible. To such a state of affairs it is convenient to give the name of progress. No one confessed the Machine was out of hand. Year by year it was served with increased efficiency and decreased intelligence. The better a man knew his own duties upon it, the less he understood the duties of his neighbor, and in all the world there was not one who understood the monster as a whole. Those master brains had perished. They had left full directions, it is true, and their successors had each of them mastered a portion of those directions. But Humanity, in its desire for comfort, had over-reached itself. It had exploited the riches of nature too far. Quietly and complacently, it was sinking into decadence, and progress had come to mean the progress of the Machine.

As for Vashti, her life went peacefully forward until the final disaster. She made her room dark and slept; she awoke and made the room light. She

lectured and attended lectures. She exchanged ideas with her innumerable friends and believed she was growing more spiritual. At times a friend was granted Euthanasia, and left his or her room for the homelessness that is beyond all human conception. Vashti did not much mind. After an unsuccessful lecture, she would sometimes ask for Euthanasia herself. But the death-rate was not permitted to exceed the birth-rate, and the Machine had hitherto refused it to her.

The troubles began quietly, long before she was conscious of them.

One day she was astonished at receiving a message from her son. They never communicated, having nothing in common, and she had only heard indirectly that he was still alive, and had been transferred from the northern hemisphere, where he had behaved so mischievously, to the southern—indeed, to a room not far from her own.

"Does he want me to visit him?" she thought. "Never again, never. And I have not the time."

No, it was madness of another kind.

He refused to visualize his face upon the blue plate, and speaking out of the darkness with solemnity said:

"The Machine stops."

"What do you say?"

"The Machine is stopping, I know it, I know the signs."

She burst into a peal of laughter. He heard her and was angry, and they spoke no more.

"Can you imagine anything more absurd?" she cried to a friend. "A man who was my son believes that the Machine is stopping. It would be impious if it was not mad."

"The Machine is stopping?" her friend replied. "What does that mean? The phrase conveys nothing to me."

"Nor to me."

"He does not refer, I suppose, to the trouble there has been lately with the music?"

"Oh, no, of course not. Let us talk about music."

"Have you complained to the authorities?"

"Yes, and they say it wants mending, and referred me to the Committee of the Mending Apparatus. I complained of those curious gasping sighs that disfigure the symphonies of the Brisbane school. They sound like someone in pain. The Committee of the Mending Apparatus say that it shall be remedied shortly."

Obscurely worried, she resumed her life. For one thing, the defect in the music irritated her. For another thing, she could not forget Kuno's speech. If he had known that the music was out of repair—he could not know it, for he detested music—if he had known that it was wrong, "the Machine stops" was exactly the venomous sort of remark he would have made. Of course he had made it at a venture, but the coincidence annoyed her, and she spoke with some petulance to the Committee of the Mending Apparatus.

They replied, as before, that the defect would be set right shortly.

"Shortly! At once!" she retorted. "Why should I be worried by imperfect music? Things are always put right at once. If you do not mend it at once, I shall complain to the Central Committee."

"No personal complaints are received by the Central Committee," the Committee of the Mending Apparatus replied.

"Through whom am I to make my complaint, then?"

"Through us."

"I complain then."

"Your complaint shall be forwarded in its turn."

"Have others complained?"

This question was unmechanical, and the Committee of the Mending Apparatus refused to answer it.

"It is too bad!" she exclaimed to another of her friends. "There never was such an unfortunate woman as myself. I can never be sure of my music now. It gets worse and worse each time I summon it."

"I too have my troubles," the friend replied. "Sometimes my ideas are interrupted by a slight jarring noise."

"What is it?"

"I do not know whether it is inside my head, or inside the wall."

"Complain, in either case."

"I have complained, and my complaint will be forwarded in its turn to the Central Committee."

Time passed, and they resented the defects no longer. The defects had not been remedied, but the human tissues in that latter day had become so subservient, that they readily adapted themselves to every caprice of the Machine. The sigh at the crisis of the Brisbane symphony no longer irritated Vashti; she accepted it as part of the melody. The jarring noise, whether in the head or in the wall, was no longer resented by her friend. And so with the moldy artificial fruit, so with the bath water that began to stink, so with the defective rhymes that the poetry machine had taken to emit. All were bitterly complained of at first, and then acquiesced in and forgotten. Things went from bad to worse unchallenged.

It was otherwise with the failure of the sleeping apparatus. That was a more serious stoppage. There came a day when over the whole world—in Sumatra, in Wessex, in the innumerable cities of Courland and Brazil—the beds, when summoned by their tired owners, failed to appear. It may seem a ludicrous matter, but from it we may date the collapse of humanity. The Committee responsible for the failure was assailed by complainants, whom it referred, as usual, to the Committee of the Mending Apparatus, who in its turn assured them that their complaints would be forwarded to the Central Committee. But the discontent grew, for mankind was not yet sufficiently adaptable to do without sleeping.

"Someone is meddling with the Machine—" they began.

"Someone is trying to make himself king, to reintroduce the personal element."

"Punish that man with Homelessness."

"To the rescue! Avenge the Machine! Avenge the Machine!"

"War! Kill the man!"

But the Committee of the Mending Apparatus now came forward, and allayed the panic with well-chosen words. It confessed that the Mending Apparatus was itself in need of repair.

The effect of this frank confession was admirable.

"Of course," said a famous lecturer—he of the French Revolution, who gilded each new decay with splendor—"of course we shall not press our complaints now. The Mending Apparatus has treated us so well in the past that we all sympathize with it, and will wait patiently for its recovery. In its own good time it will resume its duties. Meanwhile let us do without our beds, our tabloids, our other little wants. Such, I feel sure, would be the wish of the Machine."

Thousands of miles away his audience applauded. The Machine still linked them. Under the seas, beneath the roots of the mountains, ran the wires through which they saw and heard, the enormous eyes and ears that were their heritage, and the hum of many workings clothed their thoughts in one garment of subserviency. Only the old and the sick remained ungrateful, for it was rumored that Euthanasia, too, was out of order, and that pain had reappeared among men.

It became difficult to read. A blight entered the atmosphere and dulled its luminosity. At times Vashti could scarcely see across her room. The air, too, was foul. Loud were the complaints, impotent the remedies, heroic the tone of the lecturer as he cried: "Courage, courage! What matter so long as the Machine goes on? To it the darkness and the light are one." And though things improved again after a time, the old brilliancy was never recaptured, and humanity never recovered from its entrance into twilight. There was an hysterical talk of "measures," of "provisional dictatorship," and the inhabitants of Sumatra were asked to familiarize themselves with the workings of the central power station, the said power station being situated in France. But for the most part panic reigned, and men spent their strength praying to their Books, tangible proofs of the Machine's omnipotence. There were gradations of terror—at times came rumors of hope—the Mending Apparatus was almost mended—the enemies of the Machine had been got under—new "nerve-centers" were evolving which would do the work even more magnificently than before. But there came a day when, without the slightest warning, without any previous hint of feebleness, the entire communication-system broke down, all over the world, and the world, as they understood it, ended.

Vashti was lecturing at the time and her earlier remarks had been punctuated with applause. As she proceeded the audience became silent, and at the conclusion there was no sound. Somewhat displeased, she called to a friend who was a specialist in sympathy. No sound: doubtless the friend was sleeping. And so with the next friend whom she tried to summon, and so with the next, until she remembered Kuno's cryptic remark, "The Machine stops."

The phrase still conveyed nothing. If Eternity was stopping it would of course be set going shortly.

For example, there was still a little light and air—the atmosphere had improved a few hours previously. There was still the Book, and while there was the Book there was security.

Then she broke down, for with the cessation of activity came an unexpected terror—silence.

She had never known silence, and the coming of it nearly killed her—it did kill many thousands of people outright. Ever since her birth she had been surrounded by the steady hum. It was to the ear what artificial air was to the lungs, and agonizing pains shot across her head. And scarcely knowing what she did, she stumbled forward and pressed the unfamiliar button, the one that opened the door of her cell.

Now the door of the cell worked on a simple hinge of its own. It was not connected with the central power station, dying far away in France. It opened, rousing immoderate hopes in Vashti, for she thought that the Machine had been mended. It opened, and she saw the dim tunnel that curved far away towards freedom. One look, and then she shrank back. For the tunnel was full of people—she was almost the last in that city to have taken alarm.

People at any time repelled her, and these were nightmares from her worst dreams. People were crawling about, people were screaming, whimpering, gasping for breath, touching each other, vanishing in the dark, and ever and anon being pushed off the platform on to the live rail. Some were fighting round the electric bells, trying to summon trains which could not be summoned. Others were yelling for Euthanasia or for respirators, or blaspheming the Machine. Others stood at the doors of their cells fearing, like herself, either to stop in them or to leave them. And behind all the uproar was silence—the silence which is the voice of the earth and of the generations who have gone.

No—it was worse than solitude. She closed the door again and sat down to wait for the end. The disintegration went on, accompanied by horrible cracks and rumbling. The valves that restrained the Medical Apparatus must have been weakened, for it ruptured and hung hideously from the ceiling. The floor heaved and fell and flung her from her chair. A tube oozed towards her serpent fashion. And at last the final horror approached—light began to ebb, and she knew that civilization's long day was closing.

She whirled round, praying to be saved from this, at any rate, kissing the Book, pressing button after button. The uproar outside was increasing, and even penetrated the wall. Slowly the brilliancy of her cell was dimmed, the reflections faded from her metal switches. Now she could not see the reading-stand, now not the Book, though she held it in her hand. Light followed the flight of sound, air was following light, and the original void returned to the cavern from which it had been so long excluded. Vashti continued to whirl, like the devotees of an earlier religion, screaming, praying, striking at the buttons with bleeding hands.

It was thus that she opened her prison and escaped—escaped in the spirit: at least so it seems to me, ere my meditation closes. That she escapes in the

body—I cannot perceive that. She struck, by chance, the switch that released the door, and the rush of foul air on her skin, the loud throbbing whispers in her ears, told her that she was facing the tunnel again, and that tremendous platform on which she had seen men fighting. They were not fighting now. Only the whispers remained, and the little whimpering groans. They were dying by hundreds out in the dark.

She burst into tears.

Tears answered her.

They wept for humanity, those two, not for themselves. They could not bear that this should be the end. Ere silence was completed their hearts were opened, and they knew what had been important on the earth. Man, the flower of all flesh, the noblest of all creatures visible, man who had once made god in his image, and had mirrored his strength on the constellations, beautiful naked man was dying, strangled in the garments that he had woven. Century after century had he toiled, and here was his reward. Truly the garment had seemed heavenly at first, shot with the colors of culture, sewn with the threads of self-denial. And heavenly it had been so long as it was a garment and no more, so long as man could shed it at will and live by the essence that is his soul, and the essence, equally divine, that is his body. The sin against the body—it was for that they wept in chief; the centuries of wrong against the muscles and the nerves, and those five portals by which we can alone apprehend—glozing it over with talk of evolution, until the body was white pap, the home of ideas as colorless, last sloshy stirrings of a spirit that had grasped the stars.

“Where are you?” she sobbed.

His voice in the darkness said, “Here.”

“Is there any hope, Kuno?”

“None for us.”

“Where are you?”

She crawled towards him over the bodies of the dead. His blood spurted over her hands.

“Quicker,” he gasped, “I am dying—but we touch, we talk, not through the Machine.”

He kissed her.

“We have come back to our own. We die, but we have recaptured life, as it was in Wessex, when Aelfrid overthrew the Danes. We know what they know outside, they who dwelt in the cloud that is the color of a pearl.”

“But, Kuno, is it true? Are there still men on the surface of the earth? Is this—this tunnel, this poisoned darkness—really not the end?”

He replied:

“I have seen them, spoken to them, loved them. They are hiding in the mist and the ferns until our civilization stops. Today they are the Homeless—tomorrow—”

“Oh, tomorrow—some fool will start the Machine again, tomorrow.”

“Never,” said Kuno, “never. Humanity has learnt its lesson.”

As he spoke, the whole city was broken like a honeycomb. An air-ship had sailed in through the vomitory into a ruined wharf. It crashed downwards, exploding as it went, rending gallery after gallery with its wings of steel. For a moment they saw the nations of the dead, and, before they joined them, scraps of the untainted sky.

DRAMA

A NOTE ON THE DRAMA

PLAYS of course are meant to be seen, not read. The writer is only one of the many creative artists whose combined efforts result in the final unified effect of a stage presentation. Yet the reading of printed plays does give enjoyment and profit; otherwise they would not be printed. The profitable and even the enjoyable reading of plays is not easy, however. Unless the reader makes an intelligent attempt to visualize the sets, the persons of the drama, and the movements of those persons in relation to the sets and to each other, in other words unless he actually stages the play in his own imagination, he is not reading a play, he is simply following dialogue. And even reading dialogue has its difficulties. In a story told in dialogue the author does not have the opportunity which he has in other forms of fiction, like the novel, the short story, and narrative poetry, to amplify his story by surrounding the speeches with description and expository comment. The reader has therefore to pay closer attention to the bare speeches, since they are his only true key to the action and to an understanding of the characters—even though the dialogue may be pieced out to some extent with stage directions.

The play reader does have an especially good opportunity to study dramatic structure. He has the leisure (which the play-goer does not) to ponder the effect of individual speeches, to go back and observe how the author has built up gradually to the emotional climax of a scene or an act. He can reread the climactic portions of earlier scenes and note how the interest and emotion rise to the final climax of the play and how satisfactorily the play is concluded thereafter. Or he can, if he is particularly interested in characterization, read through the speeches of a single person and gain a shrewder understanding of that person and his part in the action.

Like short stories, plays are of many types. Time-honored names like comedy and tragedy apply less exactly to modern plays than to ancient, as the examples which follow show. Farce (exaggerated horseplay or slapstick) is often combined with a more feeling humor or even pathos or for that matter with satire. It is interesting to try to disentangle these different elements in plays like *The Male Animal* and *Of Thee I Sing*. Serious plays likewise seldom strive for a single effect. In *Key Largo* an attempt is made to dignify a realistic, modern subject by giving it a poetic and philosophic treatment. The historical play, however, cannot escape its ancient problem: certain known historical events being given, how can they be dramatically and convincingly animated? What kind of persons must they have been who participated in such events? It is an eternally fascinating question for all men who would learn from the past, one answer to which is provided in *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*.

JAMES THURBER and ELLIOTT NUGENT¹

THE MALE ANIMAL

CHARACTERS

CLEOTA	JOE FERGUSON
ELLEN TURNER	MRS. BLANCHE DAMON
TOMMY TURNER	ED KELLER
PATRICIA STANLEY	MYRTLE KELLER
WALLY MYERS	NUTSY MILLER
DEAN FREDERICK DAMON	NEWSPAPER REPORTER
MICHAEL BARNES	

Time: The present.

The scene of the play is the living room of the Turners' house, in a Mid-Western college town.

ACT ONE: A Friday in late fall, evening.

ACT TWO:

Scene I. The next day, after lunch.

Scene II. Three hours later.

ACT THREE: Two days later.

ACT ONE

SCENE: *The living room of a pleasant, inexpensive little house. There is no distinction of architectural design, but someone with natural good taste has managed to make it look attractive and liveable on a very modest budget. There are some good prints on the walls. The hangings are cheerful, and the furniture, picked up through various bargains and inheritances, goes together to make a pleasing, informal atmosphere.*

The front door opens onto a porch. The wall is lined with bookshelves which continue around the corner to the fireplace. Below this fireplace is a stand with a radio-phonograph. In the center of the rear wall is a bay window with window seat. This corner is used by the Turner family as a casual depository for visitors' hats and coats, although they have also a coat-rail just inside the front door. In front of the bay window, a long table backs a comfortable couch. To the right of the bay window are more bookshelves, a small landing, and a stair-

The Male Animal. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

¹ See p. 653 for biographical sketch of James Thurber and Elliott Nugent.

way running up and off-stage. In the corner below the stair near the dining-room door a table has been prepared today to serve as a temporary bar, with a tray, cocktail shaker, and two or three bottles and glasses. On the right there are two doors, one leading to the dining room, the other to another porch and the back yard. Two small sofas, an armchair, a couple of small end or coffee tables, and one or two straight chairs complete the furnishings of the room. There are two or three vases of flowers, and the books and magazines which frequently litter this room have been put tidily away.

At the rise of the curtain, the phone on the table behind the sofa is ringing. CLEOTA, a colored maid, enters from the dining room and answers it.

CLEOTA. Professah Turner's res-i-dence. . . . Who? . . . You got de wrong numbah. . . . Who? . . . What you say? . . . Oh, Mistah Turner! No, he ain' heah. He jus' went out to buy some likkah. . . . Who is dis callin'? Yes-suh. Yessuh. Ah doan get dat, but Ah'll tell him Doctah Damon. Ah say Ah'll tell him. *(She hangs up phone, starts for dining room.)*

ELLEN'S VOICE *(upstairs)*. Who was it, Cleota?

CLEOTA. It was Doctah Damon. He say he comin' ovah to see Mistah Turner or Mistah Turner come over to see him, or sumpin'. *(She turns on lights from wall switch.)*

ELLEN *(coming downstairs)*. What was that again, Cleota? *(She is an extremely pretty young woman about twenty-nine or thirty. Quick of speech and movement, she has a ready smile and a sweetness of personality that warms the room. She is completely feminine and acts always from an emotional, not an intellectual stimulus.)*

CLEOTA. Doctah Damon doan talk up. He kinda muffles.

[ELLEN begins to put finishing touches to the room with quick efficiency, putting away magazines and books.]

ELLEN. I'm afraid it's you that kind of muffles.

CLEOTA. Yessum. Miz Turner, Ah'm fixin' dem hoar doves for the pahty. Did you say put dem black seed ones in de oven?

ELLEN. Black seed ones? Oh, heavens, Cleota, you're not heating the caviar?

CLEOTA. No'm, Ah ain' heatin' it, but taste lak' sumpin' oughtta be done to it.

ELLEN. It's to be served cold. Here, you pick up the rest of the magazines. I'll take a look at the canapés. *(Hurries off into dining room.)*

CLEOTA. Yessum. Ah ain' no hand at 'em. People where Ah worked last jus' drank without eatin' anything. *(There is the sound of whistling outside, and TOMMY TURNER enters. He is a young associate professor, thirty-three years old. He wears glasses, is rather more charming than handsome. His clothes are a little baggy. He has a way of disarranging his hair with his hands, so that he looks like a puzzled spaniel at times. He is carrying chrysanthemums and two bottles of liquor, wrapped in paper and tied with string)* Oh, hello, Mr. Turner.

TOMMY. Hello, Cleota.

CLEOTA. You bettah not mess up dis room 'cause dey is guess comin'.

TOMMY. All right, Cleota. I'll be good.

[CLEOTA gives him a doubting look and dawdles off to dining room. We see what she means when TOMMY unwraps his packages. In a moment, paper and string drop about him like falling leaves. Manfully, he sticks flowers in the vase among the other flowers. A book with a gay jacket catches his eye. He looks at it disapprovingly, throws it in wastebasket. ELLEN enters from dining room.]

ELLEN. Hello, dear.

TOMMY. Hello, Ellen. Those are for you. (*Indicates his flowers.*)

ELLEN. Oh, thank you, Tommy. They're lovely. (*Surveys the flowers.*)

TOMMY. The ones in the middle.

ELLEN. Yes . . .

TOMMY. I got the liquor, too.

ELLEN (*taking flowers out of vase*). Did you get the right kind?

TOMMY. I got both kinds.

[ELLEN picks up the litter he has made.]

ELLEN. Tommy, you're a house-wrecker, but you're nice. (*Kisses him.*)

TOMMY. Did I do something right?

ELLEN. Cleota! Cleota, will you fill this vase with water, please? (*Hands vase to CLEOTA in doorway. CLEOTA goes out*) What became of the book that was on this table?

TOMMY. That? Oh, I threw it in the wastebasket. It's trash.

ELLEN (*rescuing book*). But you can't throw it away. Wally gave it to Patricia.

TOMMY. Oh, he did?

ELLEN. Besides, it's just the right color for this room.

[*Young voices are raised outside and PATRICIA STANLEY, ELLEN's sister, opens the door and backs into the room. She is a pretty, lively girl of nineteen or twenty. She is followed by WALLY MYERS, who is six-feet-one, and weighs 190 pounds, mostly muscle.*]

PAT'S VOICE. Oh, Wally, quit arguing! I'm going to dinner with Mike, and then to the rally with you. You can't feed me at the training table.

WALLY. Aw, that guy Barnes! I don't see why you have to . . . Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Turner—Professor Turner?

TOMMY. Hello, Butch.

ELLEN. That's Wally Myers.

WALLY (*to PATRICIA*). Oh, has Butch been coming here, too?

PATRICIA. Go on, get out of here, half-back. I have to get dressed. (*As she sits down and inspects a run in her stocking*) Hey, Ellen, excited about seeing the great Ferguson again? He just drove up to the Beta House in a Duesenberg!

[CLEOTA re-enters with the vase; gives it to ELLEN and leaves.]

ELLEN (*arranging TOMMY's flowers*). Did you see him?

PATRICIA. No, the kids were telling me. Has he still got his hair?

ELLEN. I haven't seen him in ten years. We'll soon find out.

WALLY. Say, is he coming here?

ELLEN. Yes. Why don't you come back and meet him, Wally? You can tell him all about the game tomorrow.

WALLY. Gee, thanks! But nobody could tell Joe Ferguson anything about a football game. He's all-time All-American, you know. Well, thanks, Mrs. Turner. I'll be back. See you later, Pat. (WALLY goes out.)

TOMMY. Does he mean that now Joe belongs to the ages, like Lincoln?

ELLEN. Um-hum, in a way.

TOMMY (crossing to bookcase). Well, I suppose he has passed into legend. I used to admire him myself—almost.

ELLEN. Pat, why don't you and Michael stay here for dinner? Supper, rather. It's just a bite. We're all going out to eat after the rally.

PATRICIA. No, thanks. You know Michael hates Mr. Keller. He'd spit in his eye.

TOMMY. Why do we have to have Ed Keller to this party? (Carrying three copies of Harper's, he sits on settee.)

ELLEN. Oh, Joe has to have someone to talk football with. Besides, Ed's his closest friend here. He practically paid Joe's way through college. You can stand the Kellers one night.

TOMMY. Just barely. I don't know how to entertain trustees.

PATRICIA. You'd better be entertaining tonight with the great Ferguson coming. (Rises) Weren't you engaged to him once, Ellen?

ELLEN. Not officially. Just for fun.

PATRICIA (going upstairs). Baby, that can be dangerous, too!

ELLEN. Oh, Dean Damon phoned, Tommy.

TOMMY. What'd he want?

ELLEN. I don't know. Cleota answered the phone.

TOMMY. Oh . . . I see. . . . Oh, I'll bet I know what it was. I saw him this morning. What do you think?

ELLEN. Oh, I don't know. . . . Oh, Tommy, you don't mean . . . ?

TOMMY. Yes, I do.

ELLEN. Oh, Tommy, that's wonderful! It's three hundred and fifty more a year, isn't it?

TOMMY. Five hundred! I'm no piker.

ELLEN. Well, you certainly deserve it. (Gives him a little kiss.)

TOMMY. Now I can get you that fur coat next February. People must think I let you freeze in the winter.

ELLEN (crossing to table). No, they don't. And, don't worry about me—you need some new things yourself. . . . I love the flowers, Tommy. And this promotion couldn't have come on a better day for me. Do you know what day it is?

TOMMY. Friday, isn't it? Why?

ELLEN. Oh, nothing—never mind. (Glances around room) What became of all the match boxes? I had one in each ash tray. (She returns and digs in his coat pocket.)

TOMMY. I haven't seen any match boxes. What's going on here? Say, you look very pretty tonight. That's a new dress, isn't it?

ELLEN. No. It's my hair that's bothering you. It's done a new way.

TOMMY. Doesn't bother me. I like it.

ELLEN (*who has found two match boxes*). One more.

TOMMY. Oh, you exaggerate this match-box thing. Oh. (*Hands her one*) I ought to take you out to dinner more and show you off.

ELLEN (*redistributing match boxes*). Well, we're going out tonight after the rally.

TOMMY. I mean just the two of us. Tonight will be just like old times. Remember how Joe was always horning in on our dinner dates? I don't believe we ever had one that he didn't come over and diagram the Washington Monument play or something on the tablecloth with a pencil.

ELLEN. Statue of Liberty play, darling.

TOMMY. He was always coming. I never saw him going.

ELLEN. There's still one missing.

TOMMY. I haven't got it. (*He finds it*) I'll bet Joe does something to get his wife down. Probably cleans his guns with doilies. Clumsy guy. Always knocking knives and forks on the floor.

ELLEN. He wasn't clumsy. He was very graceful. He was a swell dancer. (*She puts away some books.*)

TOMMY. I remember he got the first and the last dance with you the last time we all went to a dance together.

ELLEN. Phi Psi Christmas dance, wasn't it?

TOMMY. No, the May dance. Out at the Trowbridge Farm. Remember how it rained?

ELLEN. I remember I had the last dance with Joe because you disappeared somewhere.

TOMMY. No, I was watching—from behind some ferns.

ELLEN. They played "Three O'Clock in the Morning" and "Who?" It was a lovely night, wasn't it?

TOMMY. No, it poured down. You and Joe were dancing out on the terrace when it started. You both got soaked, but you kept right on dancing. (*Having found what he wanted, TOMMY returns two magazines to shelves.*)

ELLEN. Oh, yes, I remember. My dress was ruined.

TOMMY. You were shining wet—like Venus and Triton.

ELLEN. Why didn't you cut in? (*Takes magazine TOMMY left on coffee table to bookcase.*)

TOMMY. I had a cold. Besides, my feet hurt. (*He starts toward stairs*) I'll dress. (*Doorbell rings*) Lord, I hope he isn't here already.

[ELLEN admits DAMON and MICHAEL. DAMON, the head of the English department, is a tall, thin, distinguished-looking man of some sixty-five years. He has gray hair, eyes capable of twinkling through glasses whose rims he has a habit of peering over. He talks slowly, selecting his words, in a voice at once compelling and humorous. He often hesitates, peers over his glasses before saying the last word of a phrase or a sentence. MICHAEL BARNES is a senior in the Arts College, an intensely serious young man and a fine literary student. The older people who surround him find his

youthful grimness about life's problems sometimes amusing, but more frequently alarming.]

ELLEN. Oh, come in, Dr. Damon. Hello, Michael.

MICHAEL. How do you do?

TOMMY. How do you do, sir?

DAMON. Hello, Thomas.

ELLEN. Where's Mrs. Damon?

DAMON. I shall pick her up and bring her along shortly for the festivities. This is in the nature of an unofficial call.

TOMMY. Hello, Michael. You both look a little grim. Has anything happened?

DAMON. Michael has written another of his fiery editorials.

[PATRICIA runs down the stairs.]

PATRICIA. Ellen, did you see my— Oh! How do you do, Dr. Damon? Hi, Michael.

MICHAEL. H'lo.

DAMON. Sit down, my dear. I have here an editorial written by Michael for *The Lit*, which comes out tomorrow. Perhaps, to save time, one of us should read it aloud. . . .

"When this so-called University forces such men out of its faculty as Professor Kennedy, Professor Sykes, and Professor Chapman, because they have been ignorantly called Reds, it surrenders its right to be called a seat of learning. It admits that it is nothing more nor less than a training school"—(you will recognize the voice of our good friend, Hutchins, of Chicago)—"a training school for bond salesmen, farmers, real-estate dealers, and ambulance chasers. It announces to the world that its faculty is subservient. . . ." (DAMON *peers over glasses at MICHAEL.*)

MICHAEL. Oh, I didn't mean you, of course, Dr. Damon.

DAMON. ". . . that its faculty is subservient to its trustees, and that its trustees represent a political viewpoint which must finally emerge under its proper name, which is—Fascism."

PATRICIA. Oh, Michael! There you go again!

DAMON. Wait till you hear where he has actually gone.

PATRICIA. Isn't that all?

DAMON. Unhappily, there is more.

PATRICIA. Oh, Lord!

[TOMMY sits down.]

DAMON (*continuing*). "These professors were not Reds. They were distinguished liberals. Let us thank God that we still have one man left who is going ahead teaching what he believes should be taught."

TOMMY. Who's that?

DAMON. Sh! "He is not afraid to bring up even the Sacco-Vanzetti case. He has read to his classes on the same day Vanzetti's last statement and Lincoln's letter to Mrs. Bixby." (I hope we are not alienating the many friends of Abraham Lincoln.) (TOMMY *rises and glances at MICHAEL questioningly*) "The hounds of bigotry and reaction will, of course, be set upon the trail of this

courageous teacher, but, if they think they are merely on the spoor of a lamb they are destined to the same disappointment as the hunters who, in chasing the wild boar, came accidentally upon a tigress and her cubs. Our hats are off to Professor Thomas Turner of the English Department." That's all.

ELLEN. Tommy?

TOMMY. Michael, I think you might have consulted me about this.

PATRICIA. Michael, you fool! They'll kick you out of school for this—and Tommy, too!

ELLEN. You never told me you had brought up the Sacco-Vanzetti case in your classes, Tommy.

DAMON. Yes, just what is this Vanzetti letter you have read?

TOMMY. I haven't read it yet.

MICHAEL. When you told me the other day you were going to read it, I thought you meant that day.

TOMMY. No, Michael, I just meant some day. But I was talking to you as a friend, I was not giving an interview to an editor.

ELLEN. But why were you going to read this letter, Tommy?

TOMMY. Because it's a fine piece of English composition, and I'm teaching a class in English composition. An obscure little class. I don't want any publicity, Michael. I just want to be let alone.

ELLEN. But, Tommy, nobody thinks of Vanzetti as a writer.

TOMMY. It happens that he developed into an extraordinary writer. I don't think you could help being interested in the letter yourself, Dr. Damon.

DAMON. You would be surprised at my strength of will in these matters, Thomas. What I am interested in is preserving some air of academic calm here at Midwestern—and also in retaining my chair in the English department.

PATRICIA. You don't want to get Tommy kicked out of school, do you, Michael?

MICHAEL. No. I didn't think of that. I thought Mr. Turner was about the only man we had left who would read whatever he wanted to to his classes. I thought he was the one man who would stand up to these stadium builders.

TOMMY. I'm not standing up to anyone, Michael. I'm not challenging anyone. This is just an innocent little piece I wanted to read.

[MICHAEL *turns away*.]

ELLEN (*rises*). I know it must be all right, Tommy, but you can't read it now. Keller and the other trustees kicked Don Chapman out last month for doing things just as harmless as this. (*Turning to MICHAEL*) You'll have to change that editorial, Michael.

MICHAEL. I can't. The magazines were run off the presses last night. They've already been delivered to the newsstands.

DAMON. They go on sale in the morning. (*To ELLEN*) I think that our—er—tigress here may have to issue a denial tomorrow. After all, he hasn't read it.

ELLEN (*to TOMMY*). Yes, and you mustn't read it now.

PATRICIA. Will Michael be kicked out of school, Dr. Damon?

DAMON. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, my dear. (*He gets his hat.*)

PATRICIA (*to MICHAEL*). There! You see—

DAMON (*coming to TOMMY who has seated himself at the other side of the room*). I quite understand how you meant to present it, Thomas, but our good friend, Mr. Keller, would not. Do not underestimate Mr. Edward K. Keller. He rolls like the juggernaut over the careers of young professors.

TOMMY. I know.

DAMON (*starting to door*). Well—since he must be with us tonight let us confine our conversation to the woeful inadequacies of the Illinois team.

TOMMY (*rising*). Oh, it isn't Illinois we're playing—it's Michigan.

DAMON. Oh, I must remember that. (*Goes out.*)

PATRICIA (*to MICHAEL*). There, you see! You will be kicked out.

MICHAEL. He didn't say that.

PATRICIA. Yes, he did. Don't come back for me, Michael. I'm staying here for supper. (*Runs up the stairs.*)

MICHAEL. I see. . . . I'm sorry, Mr. Turner. I guess I got—well—carried away.

TOMMY (*crossing*). I know, Michael. Sometimes, when I see that light in your eye I wish I could be carried away too.

MICHAEL. Yes, sir. (*He goes out grimly. There is a slight pause.*)

TOMMY. Well—

ELLEN. I'm sorry, Tommy.

TOMMY. Oh, it's all right. Maybe I can read this thing later on, after all the fuss quiets down—say, next spring.

ELLEN. It would still be dangerous.

TOMMY. Yes, I guess it would. . . . I know I'm not a tiger, but I don't like to be thought of as a pussycat either.

ELLEN (*with an understanding smile*). It's getting late. You'd better go and put on that gray suit I laid out for you.

TOMMY. Yeh, sure. (*Crosses to stairs.*)

ELLEN. And be sure your socks are right side out, and, Tommy—don't try to be a tiger in front of Ed Keller.

TOMMY (*at stair landing*). I won't. I'm scared of those Neanderthal men. I'll talk about football.

ELLEN. Thank you, darling. That's swell. You know how Joe is—always cheerful. And we do want it to be a good party.

TOMMY (*starting upstairs*). I'll be cheerful. I'll be merry and bright. I'll be the most cheerful son-of-a-gun in this part of the country. (*He disappears. We hear him singing a snatch of "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" The doorbell rings.*)

ELLEN. Hurry, Tommy! They're here! (*Crosses to the door and admits JOE FERGUSON, followed by WALLY MYERS*) Hello, Joe!

JOE. Ellen! How are you, baby? God, you look great! Why, you're younger and prettier than ever! If I were a braver man, I'd kiss you. Doggone it, I will kiss you! (*Kisses her on cheek, hugs her, lifts her off the floor—whirls her around. WALLY closes door. JOE is all that we have been led to expect: big, dynamic, well dressed, prosperous. He is full of good nature and a boundless enthusiasm for everything.*)

ELLEN (*catching something of his ebullience*). It's terribly nice to see you again, Joe. If I were a younger woman, I'd say it's been all of ten years.

JOE (*whipping off his coat, he puts down a small box on sofa*). Gosh, this is swell! Where's the great Thomas?

ELLEN. Tommy will be right down. I see Wally found you—so you've met?

JOE—Yeh. We joined forces outside.

[WALLY *hangs up* JOE's coat.]

ELLEN (*at settee*). Come on over here and sit down.

JOE. I forgot to ask you, Wally, who's going in at the other half tomorrow? Stalenkiwicz?

WALLY. No, sir. Wierasocka.

JOE. Really?

WALLY. He's a Beta. From Oregon.

JOE. Oh, yeh—yeh, I know.

WALLY. Stalenkiwicz is laid up. They think he's got whooping cough. (*He sits in center of settee beside ELLEN.*)

JOE. That's bad! I've got a thousand fish on that game. (*Sits on settee. It is very crowded.*)

WALLY. I think it's safe, all right, Mr. Ferguson, but I wish we had you. Stalenkiwicz, Wierasocka, Myers and Whirling Joe Ferguson.

ELLEN. Do they still call you Whirling Joe?

JOE. Oh, sure, remember how—

WALLY. Say, he was the greatest open-field runner there ever was.

ELLEN. Yes. Joe, why haven't you ever been—

WALLY. Why, you made Red Grange look like a cripple.

JOE. Well, they say you're not so bad yourself. Say, Ellen, how's—

WALLY. Aw, I'm just fair, that's all. (*Produces a clipping*) This is what Grantland Rice said about me. (*Hands it to JOE.*)

JOE (*beginning to wish WALLY would go*). Yeh. Too bad this is Wally's last year. We're going to miss him—eh, Ellen?

ELLEN (*pointedly*). Have you got anything to do, Wally?

WALLY. Coach wants me to help him with the backfield next season. Not much money in it, of course.

JOE (*hands clipping back to WALLY*). Well, if you want my advice, don't go in for coaching. I had a sweet offer from Cincinnati in twenty-nine. Remember that, Ellen?

ELLEN. I remember very well. Do you remember when—

WALLY. Nineteen twenty-nine! I was only twelve years old then.

TOMMY (*coming downstairs*). Hello, Joe! It's nice to see you again!

JOE (*rises and shakes hands*). Tommy, old man, how are you? Ten years! Teaching must be good for you. And Ellen, here, looks like a million bucks! That reminds me—I came laden with gifts. (*Turns and almost runs into WALLY. He recovers and gets the small box*) These are a few flowering weeds. . . .

ELLEN (*opening the box of orchids*). Oh, thank you, Joe. They're lovely. Tommy, will you call Cleota?

TOMMY. Sure. (*Goes to dining-room door, calls*) Cleota!

ELLEN. It's fun to get flowers. Very festive.

JOE. Oh, it's nothing much, but I wanted you to know I remembered the great day. Think I'd forget it was your birthday?

ELLEN. You never used to. (TOMMY *has rejoined them*) Tommy gave me some flowering weeds, too—for my birthday.

TOMMY. Yes, I got her some—for your—oh—yes. . . . Not such nice ones, I'm afraid. (*To ELLEN*) I'm a lucky man.

[CLEOTA *enters.*]

ELLEN. Will you find something to put these in, Cleota?

CLEOTA. Ah'll hafta put 'em in de sink wit dat ice. (*Goes out with flowers.*)

JOE. Boy, it's sure great to be here!

TOMMY. It's nice to have you. . . . Staying long?

JOE. Got to be in Washington next week. Well, Tommy, I see you've still got a lot of books.

TOMMY. Oh, yes.

JOE. You know I never get a chance to read books. (*He sits on settee again.*)

WALLY. Say, you must have a swell job! (*He sits on bench before fireplace.*)

JOE. By the time I get through at night, I'm lucky if I can keep up with what's going on in the world. Way things are changing, you gotta do that. I take fifteen magazines. That keeps me busy.

ELLEN (*linking an arm through TOMMY's*). Tommy's had several articles in *Harper's* and the *Atlantic*.

JOE. No! Say, that's fine! But you'll have to boil them down to *The Reader's Digest* to reach me, Tommy. You know, that's a great little magazine.

TOMMY. Do you like bullion cubes?

ELLEN (*hastily*). Tommy, you'd better make a drink.

TOMMY. Yes. We have a lot of celebrating to do. (*He goes out to dining room, calling CLEOTA.*)

ELLEN. How've you been, Joe? (*Sits next to JOE.*)

JOE. Fine, except for a little sinus trouble.

WALLY. You know, Mrs. Turner, I recognized him right away from that big picture in the gym.

[TOMMY *re-enters with bowl of ice, mixes drinks at table.*]

ELLEN. That's fine. How's Brenda? I meant to ask before.

JOE. Fine! Great! Little heavier, maybe. We're being divorced, you know.

ELLEN. But I didn't know. Oh, Joe, I'm sorry.

JOE. Nothing to be sorry about. It's just one of those things.

TOMMY. What's the matter?

ELLEN. Joe and his wife are breaking up.

TOMMY. Oh, that's too bad.

JOE. No, it's all fine. We're both taking it in our stride. Took her out to dinner last week—along with her new boy friend.

TOMMY. Wasn't that rather complicated?

ELLEN. Oh, you're not up to date, Tommy. That's the modern way of doing things.

JOE. Sure. Take it in your stride. Gosh, Ellen, I can't take my eyes off you. (*At WALLY's chuckle, JOE rises and changes the subject*) Nice little place you got here. Need any help, Tommy? I'm a demon on Mannhattans. (*He is starting toward TOMMY when the doorbell rings.*)

TOMMY. I'm all right, thanks.

JOE. I hope that's Ed, the old scoundrel.

[ELLEN admits the DAMONS.]

ELLEN. I'm so glad— Hello, Mrs. Damon.

BLANCHE. Hello, Ellen, dear. How do you do, Mr. Turner?

ELLEN. You must know Joe Ferguson.

BLANCHE. Oh, of course. How do you do?

[JOE bows, smiling.]

ELLEN. This is Mrs. Damon, Joe. And you remember Dean Damon?

JOE. Yes, indeed. Nice to see you again, sir.

DAMON (*crossing to him and shaking hands*). Back for the slaughter of the—uh—Michigan innocents, eh?

JOE. That's right.

[ELLEN and BLANCHE have turned to WALLY.]

ELLEN. Mrs. Damon, may I present Mr. Myers?

[BLANCHE shakes hands with him.]

WALLY. How do you do?

BLANCHE. Oh, yes, of course we all know about our great full-back.

[TOMMY gives JOE a cocktail.]

ELLEN. Let me help you with your coat.

BLANCHE. Thank you, dear. (*To WALLY*) Tell me, are you nervous about the game tomorrow?

WALLY. No, ma'am.

BLANCHE. Not the least little bit?

WALLY. No, ma'am.

BLANCHE. That's nice. (*Smiling at his surprise, she sits on settee.*)

DAMON (*to JOE*). I remember you not only from the gridiron but from my Shakespeare class. You slept very quietly.

JOE. I never did finish reading *Hamlet*. I always wondered how that came out. (*He laughs heartily; DAMON laughs politely.*)

TOMMY. Does anybody mind a Manhattan?

BLANCHE. Oh, Ellen. Could we have sherry?

ELLEN. Certainly. Tommy . . .

[TOMMY, who is bringing two cocktails to the DAMONS, pauses uncertainly.]

TOMMY. Sherry coming right up. Here, Wally. (*Gives him cocktail.*)

WALLY. No, thanks. I'm in training.

TOMMY. Well, just hold it. Sherry for you, too, Dr. Damon?

DAMON (*disappointed*). When Mrs. Damon says we, she means me. Sherry, thanks.

[TOMMY drinks the left-over cocktail.]

BLANCHE. A little sherry is such fun. (*WALLY offers her a cigarette from the box on the coffee table*) No, thanks, I'll smoke my Spuds.

[WALLY lights BLANCHE's cigarette.]

PATRICIA (*coming downstairs*). Hello, everybody.

ELLEN (*presenting PAT to JOE*). This is my sister, Patricia.

PATRICIA. How do you do?

JOE (*admiring her*). How do you *do*? My goodness! Why, you're as big and pretty as your sister. How about a drink?

PATRICIA. No, thanks. (*To ELLEN, as she crosses to WALLY*) Still has his hair. Hello, Wally.

[TOMMY *serves sherry to the DAMONS.*]

WALLY. Hi, Pat. Look, can I pick you up at Hennick's a little earlier?

PATRICIA. I'm not going to Hennick's. I'm eating here. That date's off.

WALLY. With Barnes? Say, that's swell. . . . I got to run along, Mrs. Turner. Nice party. (*Crosses to JOE*) Glad I met you, Joe—I mean, Mr. Ferguson. (*They shake hands*) I'll be seeing you. Good-bye, everybody. I'll go out the back way. (*He goes out the door which leads into the garden.*)

JOE. Take it easy, old man. Don't break a leg on me. Remember, I've got a thousand fish on that game. (*Follows WALLY out.*)

BLANCHE. He's a handsome boy, Patricia. (*Doorbell rings*) And seems very healthy.

PATRICIA. I have to keep in training for him. (*PATRICIA and DAMON sit down on the bench before the fireplace.*)

TOMMY (*going to door*). I'll get it.

[ELLEN *joins TOMMY and greets the KELLERS as they come in. ED KELLER is a big, loud, slightly bald man of about thirty-eight, heavy around the middle. He is a prosperous real-estate man, owns the Keller Building, is a trustee and as such is the biggest voice and strongest hand on the board. MYRTLE KELLER, also in her late thirties, dresses well and is not bad looking, was once pretty, but is now a slightly faded blonde.*]

ED. Hello, Ellen! Hi, Turner! Where is he? (*He passes TOMMY fast, without a handshake, looking for JOE who reappears. The two men run to meet each other. This is a typical meeting between two old friends of the hale-and-hearty, back-slapping persuasion who haven't met for years*) Hiya, you old rascal! Hahya, boy?

JOE (*as they clinch in the middle of the room, hugging, slapping backs, etc.*). Hello, you old son-of-a-gun! How are you, Ed? (*He goes to MYRTLE*) Hello, Myrtle. Gosh, I'm glad to see you! (*He hugs her, lifting her off her feet.*)

MYRTLE (*screams*). Oh! I'm glad to see you, too! Ellen . . .

JOE (*returning to ED*). Gee, you're looking swell, Ed, old boy, old boy!

ED. Judas Priest, this is swell! How are you anyway, Joe?

[*The men's voices predominate.*]

JOE. Fine! Swell! Never better. You've put on a little weight, eh, Ed-die? And what's happened to the crowning glory?

ED. Worry: real-estate, Roosevelt. Wonder I got any left.

MYRTLE. How do you do, Dr. Damon? How do you do, Mrs. Damon? Haven't seen you in a long, long time. Hello, Patricia. . . . (*She sits beside MRS. DAMON*) Oh, quiet down! Ed! Are we late, Ellen?

ELLEN. Not at all. Just in time for the canapés.

JOE. How long's it been, Ed? Seven, eight years, isn't it?

ED. Eight, anyway.

ELLEN. Look, you two, break it up and say hello to people!

ED. All right, Ellen, but it sure is fine to see the Whirler again. How do you do, Dr. Damon? Not drinking straight Scotch, I hope?

DAMON. If I did that, my stomach—and Mrs. Damon—would punish me severely.

ELLEN. Won't you have a cocktail, Ed? (*Brings drink to ED.*)

ED. Thanks.

JOE. Say, this is Ellen's birthday. How about a little toast?

TOMMY. Well, fill 'em up. (*He pours drinks, including one for himself.*)

ED. Well, happy birthday, Ellen. (*He starts "Happy Birthday to You," and they all sing. It is obvious TOMMY is bored; he sits down, sips his drink, then noticing everybody standing, he rises and sings the last line very off key. CLEOTA enters, comes up behind DAMON with a plate of canapés.*)

CLEOTA (*after their song dies*). Hoar doves?

DAMON (*startled*). I beg your pardon—oh! Thank you.

JOE (*as TOMMY pours another round*). Let's drink one toast to The Big Red Team. What do you say? (*TOMMY starts humming "The Big Bad Wolf."*)

ED. The Big Red Team!

TOMMY (*singing softly to himself*).

"The Big Red Team—

Big Red Team.

Who's afraid of The Big Red Team . . ."

ED. What's that?

TOMMY. Huh? (*ED glares at him. To ELLEN*) What did I do?

ELLEN. Tommy, you'd better eat something. Those cocktails are strong.

TOMMY. I'm doing all right, honey. How's everything in Detroit, Joe?

JOE. I don't know. All right, I guess. (*ED and JOE seat themselves on settee away from the women.*)

ELLEN. Tommy means Pittsburgh. The Bryson Steel Company is in Pittsburgh, Tommy. (*CLEOTA gives ELLEN the tray and goes out.*)

TOMMY. Oh, yes, sure. Well, how's everything in Pittsburgh?

JOE. Well, it might be worse.

ED. Couldn't be much worse out here.

TOMMY. Have a drink.

ELLEN (*takes canapés to MYRTLE*). How are the kids, Myrtle?

MYRTLE. They're all right. The baby has some kind of rash on her little hips, but it's nothing, really. Makes her cross, though.

ED. Time sure does fly. Now Buster wants to go to Princeton. No matter how you watch 'em, they get in with the wrong kids.

[*The women's voices predominate.*]

BLANCHE. How's your sister?

JOE. I remember when I actually

MYRTLE. They took a stone out of her as big as a walnut. She got along with only one car, and thought it was plenty. Now I've got

can't weigh more than ninety pounds. three, and the bills are terrific. . . .
Do you know what my gas bill was last month? . . .

[DAMON rises, bored, picks out a book and glances through it.]

BLANCHE. They cut old Mrs. Wilmot open for the same trouble, and didn't find a thing!

MYRTLE. Ed, when was it I had that impacted tooth out?

ED. Seven years ago. Year the banks closed. Thirty-three.

TOMMY. Fill 'em up. (*Pours himself another.*)

ELLEN. Tommy! (*She takes shaker away from him*) Dividend for the women folks. Give me your glass, Myrtle.

MYRTLE. Thanks.

BLANCHE. No more for us. Mercy, we'd be light-headed.

TOMMY (*following ELLEN, takes shaker from her, pours himself another*). But we're celebrating: the homecoming game, banks closing and everything.

JOE. How's building out here now, Ed?

TOMMY (*sauntering over to the men*). Yeh, how's building?

ED. Lousy. Whatta ya expect with that man in the White House? You know what I think? I think he's crazy.

JOE. You know what I heard?

[*The women stop their talk to listen, but JOE whispers in ED's ear.*]

ED. I wouldn't be a damn bit surprised!

[TOMMY puts down shaker.]

[ED's voice predominates in the following:]

ED. Only hope for business I see is this war. And he'll probably do something to ruin that.

BLANCHE (*sotto voce*). Patricia, may I see the little girl's room?

MYRTLE. Me, too.

PATRICIA. Yes. I'll show you.

[*They start toward stairs.*]

MYRTLE (*as they start upstairs*). Is it serious?

BLANCHE. They took a pint of pus out of her!

[*Men react to this. The women go off, still chattering.*]

MYRTLE. Why, what's the matter with her?

BLANCHE. They don't know. They just hold consultations.

[TOMMY and ELLEN sit on the long sofa to listen. She quietly takes the drink from his hand.]

ED. Well, Dr. Damon, we men on the Board of Trustees are certainly glad that this Red scare is over.

DAMON. No doubt you are.

ED. Now maybe the new stadium project will get somewhere.

DAMON (*eagerly moving toward ED*). And the Endowment Fund?

ED. Yeh, sure—that's important too. I'm working to convince the substantial alumni that we've got all this Parlor-Pink business over and done with. Got 'em all weeded out.

JOE. Yeah—all that newspaper stuff was pretty bad.

ED. Sure. Nobody felt like coming through for anything when they read

about men like Kennedy and Sykes and Chapman being on the faculty. That Chapman was nothing but a damn Red.

[DAMON covers his disgust and turns to ELLEN.]

TOMMY. No, he wasn't, Mr. Keller. Don Chapman was a humanist.

ELLEN (*laying a quieting hand on TOMMY's arm*). We knew him very well.

JOE. How do you know he wasn't a Red, Tommy?

ED. He went to Soviet Russia for his vacation once, didn't he?

TOMMY (*rising*). He just went to see the Drama Festival.

ED (*suspiciously*). Well, it's a mighty long way to go to see a show.

CLEOTA (*who has just entered*). Suppah is se'ved. (*Retires to dining room.*)

ELLEN (*rising*). Shall we go into the dining room? It's only a salad. We're going out to eat afterwards. Come along, Ed, we don't want to miss that rally. (*She links her arm through ED's, and they go out to dining room.*)

ED. Say, that's right. I haven't missed a Michigan rally in seventeen years!

[ELLEN re-enters, goes to stairs, calls:]

ELLEN. Supper's ready!

[PAT, BLANCHE, and MYRTLE come downstairs.]

BLANCHE. Thank you. Come, Frederick. (DAMON and BLANCHE go into dining room.)

ELLEN. Patricia, you get a plate for Mr. Ferguson. He's the guest of honor, you know.

JOE. And I'll get a plate for you, Ellen. Come on. (JOE and PAT follow the DAMONS.)

MYRTLE (*as she goes into the dining room*). Oh, what a lovely table, Ellen! [During the following scene until ED's re-entrance, there is the general conversation in the dining room, as everybody is finding his supper and beginning to eat.]

ELLEN (*crossing to TOMMY*). Tommy, don't say any more about Don Chapman tonight, please.

TOMMY. All right, I won't. Let's get something to eat. (ELLEN takes his arm. They start for dining room) Joe looks better, doesn't he?

ELLEN. Better?

TOMMY. Well, bigger anyway.

[They exit. CLEOTA has entered with a clean-up tray. She clears away drinks and canapés, singing "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" softly. She finds one glass with some liquor in it. After a long scrutiny she raises it to her lips.]

ED (*off-stage*). Come on, Myrtle. Hurry up. Joe's got to speak at this rally. [CLEOTA drinks and quickly puts glass on tray and resumes song as ED enters with plate of food. He plants himself in the center of a settee, and also takes possession of a coffee table. BLANCHE and MYRTLE enter, with DAMON following them and carrying two plates.]

BLANCHE. Come, Myrtle, sit over here with me. Frederick, put it down over there on that table.

MYRTLE (*as they cross the room*). What makes you think there was something suspicious about it?

[*The women settle themselves on settee.*]

BLANCHE. Well, his family wouldn't allow a post-mortem. Thank you, Frederick, that's fine.

[*ELLEN and JOE come in.*]

ELLEN. I hope you can all find a place to sit.

JOE (*crossing to long sofa*). What's the matter with this? Come on, Ellen, give me a break.

[*ELLEN smiles and sits beside him, then speaks to PATRICIA, who appears in dining-room door.*]

ELLEN. Pat, is Tommy getting some food?

PATRICIA. Yeh, he's all right. (*She joins the women and DAMON, who is eating standing up at the mantel.*)

TOMMY (*entering*). Sure, I'm fine. (*He looks around for a place to settle.*)

ELLEN. Bring in the coffee, please, Cleota.

[*CLEOTA nods and goes out.*]

ED. There's room here for somebody.

TOMMY. No, thanks, I'll sit—(*Looks around for any place away from ED; the only vacant spot is a chair beside ED's settee*)—here.

MYRTLE. Eat your vegetables, Ed.

ED. Aw, this is a party.

BLANCHE. Where's Michael Barnes this evening, Patricia? Frederick tells me he's written a remarkable editorial. (*DAMON drops his fork*) Be careful, Frederick!

ED. Barnes? Barnes? I haven't read a decent editorial since Brisbane died.

PATRICIA. Michael couldn't come. He doesn't like Mr.—er—

MYRTLE. Doesn't like what?

PATRICIA. Doesn't like parties.

BLANCHE. I'm always so interested in *The Literary Magazine*. What was the editorial, Patricia?

DAMON. Eat your dinner, my dear. Remember, Mr. Keller—wants to get to the rally.

ED. Huh?

BLANCHE (*staring at him*). What's the matter with you? (*He shushes her.*
To PAT) I hope I haven't said anything, dear. (*PAT shakes her head.*)

[*CLEOTA enters with coffee and serves the guests.*]

ED. What's going on over there? Who is this Barnes?

TOMMY. One of Patricia's beaux.

ED. Some writer?

TOMMY. He's a student. Editor of *The Literary Magazine*.

ED. Oh, yeah, I've heard of him. What's he done now?

ELLEN. Oh, it's nothing, really.

TOMMY. Well, since it's come up, Ellen, we might as well tell Mr. Keller. He'll read about it tomorrow. . . . (*ELLEN rises*) I told Michael I was going

to read something to one of my English classes, and he got a mistaken idea about it and wrote a sort of—

ELLEN (*breaking in quickly*). Just a silly little editorial—that's all.

ED. I see.

PATRICIA. Because Tommy isn't really going to read it at all.

[MYRTLE *murmurs to* BLANCHE, *rises and goes to dining room.*]

ED. What was it this kid said you were going to read? Anything important?

TOMMY (*after a moment*). It's a short, but beautifully written piece of English by Bartolomeo Vanzetti.

ED. Never heard of him. (*Then, as the name registers*) Hey, you don't mean Vanzetti of Sacco and Vanzetti?

TOMMY. Yes, the same man.

ED. You mean you're going to read something *he* wrote?

TOMMY. Yes, I was going to.

ELLEN (*quickly*). But now he's not—Michael didn't understand.

ED. Why would you ever think of such a dumb thing in the first place?

[TOMMY *has lost any appetite he may have had. He rises and puts his plate and cup on the table.*]

TOMMY. It's part of a series. I read many such letters to my class.

ED. You mean letters by anarchists?

TOMMY (*restrains himself*). No, letters by men who were not professional writers—like Lincoln, General Sherman . . .

ED. Well, it's a damn good thing you changed your mind. Putting Lincoln and General Sherman in a class with Vanzetti! Wouldn't look very good.

JOE. What's this?

ED. Wait a minute. (*To* TOMMY) Is this thing going to be printed? This editorial?

DAMON. We discovered it too late to stop it.

ED. And this kid didn't submit it to the publications committee?

DAMON. Unfortunately, he did not. Ellen, dear, Mrs. Damon and I must be running along.

ELLEN. Oh, I'm sorry.

DAMON. I have a committee meeting.

BLANCHE (*astonished*). What committee?

DAMON. Come, Blanche.

BLANCHE (*rising*). Oh, yes, that little committee.

ED. Well, I hope this thing's not too bad. You better deny it quick, Turner. I tell you! I'll call the papers in the morning.

TOMMY. No, I'll take care of it.

JOE (*rises*). What's going on here?

MYRTLE (*enters from dining room with two dishes of sherbet*). Here's some sherbet, Ed.

ED. Put it down there. (*To* JOE) I'm just telling Turner here we've had enough of this Red business among the students and the faculty. Don't want any more.

TOMMY (*returning to his chair*). This isn't Red, Mr. Keller.

ED. Maybe not, but it looks bad. We don't want anything Red—or even Pink—taught here.

TOMMY. But who's to decide what is Red and Pink?

ED. We are! Somebody's got to decide what's fit to teach. If we don't, who would?

DAMON. I thought that perhaps the faculty had . . .

ED. No, sir. You fellows are too wishy-washy. We saw that in the Chapman case. Americanism is what we want taught here.

JOE. Americanism is a fine thing.

TOMMY. Fine. But how would you define Americanism?

ED. Why—er—everybody knows what Americanism is! What do you believe in?

TOMMY. I believe that a college should be concerned with ideas. Not just your ideas . . . or my ideas, but all ideas.

ED. No, sir! That's the *trouble* . . . too damn many ideas floating around. . . . You put ideas of any kind into young people's heads, and the first thing you know, they start believing them.

DAMON. On the contrary. I have been putting ideas into young people's heads for forty-two years with no—visible—results whatever.

[*There is a dubious laugh from BLANCHE.*]

BLANCHE. Come, Frederick. Good night, Ellen. Lovely party. (*She bustles DAMON out the door.*)

ED (*rises*). Turner, you better think twice before you read anything. I can promise you the trustees will clamp down on any professor who tries anything funny! I'm telling you that for your own good.

JOE. Say, I thought we were going to have some fun. Let's break this up. How about some music? (*He goes over to Victrola and puts on a record.*)

ED. That's right. We're celebrating tonight. Just wanted to get that out of my system. (*He picks up the dish of ice*) Oh, I didn't want this—I wanted some of that ice cream. (*He starts for the dining room.*)

MYRTLE. He means he wants both. Here, I'll show you. (*She follows him out.*)

[*PATRICIA starts to go, too; ELLEN, worried about TOMMY, stops her, whispering to her. PAT nods and turns to JOE, who is looking through the records.*]

PATRICIA. I'll bet you'd like some ice cream, too, Mr. Ferguson.

JOE. No, I . . . (*PATRICIA winks at him; he glances at TOMMY*) Oh, sure. Sure, I would.

PATRICIA (*linking an arm through his*). Can you still skip?

JOE. No—not at my age. (*They go into the dining room, PAT closing the door softly. TOMMY pours himself a drink.*)

ELLEN. Tommy, have you had too much to drink?

TOMMY. No. Not enough.

ELLEN. Your eyes have that funny look.

TOMMY. Did you hear what Mr. Keller said to me? I don't like to be talked to like that.

ELLEN. Just because he was nasty and you've had a few drinks. . . . (*Goes to him*) Tommy, you're not going to go ahead and read that letter?

TOMMY. Yes, Ellen, I think I have to.

ELLEN. Tommy, try to be practical for once. At least wait until you're not so mad. Try to think of this the way any other man would think of it.

TOMMY. I'm not any other man.

ELLEN. Well, try to be. Do you think Joe would do something that would get him into trouble just because somebody irritated him?

TOMMY. *Joe!* I don't see why you don't try to understand how *I* feel about this.

ELLEN. I'm simply trying to keep you out of a lot of trouble. I don't see why—

TOMMY. But you see how Joe would feel. That's very plain to you, isn't it?

ELLEN. Yes, it is. Joe wouldn't get all mixed up.

TOMMY. I'm not mixed up. I'm trying to understand what goes on in your mind. It *can't* be like Joe Ferguson's mind!

ELLEN. Oh, you and your mind! (*Turns away, exasperated*) I have to go through such a lot with your mind!

TOMMY. Maybe you wouldn't if you understood it better.

ELLEN. Oh, I know, I know! I'm too dumb for you!

TOMMY. Now, Ellen, I didn't say that.

ELLEN. You said Joe and I were stupid.

TOMMY. I said he was.

ELLEN. But he isn't. He's a big man. In some ways he's smarter than you.

TOMMY. Well, you ought to know. (*He turns away from her.*)

ELLEN (*catching his arm*). Oh, look, Tommy—what are we fighting about?

TOMMY (*turns*). You said I was dumb.

ELLEN. Tommy, you've had too many drinks or you wouldn't say that.

TOMMY. No, I haven't, but I don't feel very well. I feel very unhappy and slightly sick.

ELLEN. I'll get you some bicarbonate of soda.

TOMMY (*crossing to the stairs*). No, you won't. I'll go upstairs and lie down for a few minutes, myself. I can do that. Let's not bring this down to the level of bicarbonate of soda. (*He starts up slowly, then suddenly feels squeamish and makes a mad dash for it. ELLEN hesitates for a minute at the foot of the stairs—calls after him.*)

ELLEN. Tommy. Tommy, I didn't—

[*JOE comes from the dining room with a dish of ice cream.*]

JOE. Anything the matter?

ELLEN. Oh—no. Tommy's not feeling well. He got sick once before at a party. He's not used to drinking, and he's very sensitive about it. (*JOE nods and goes to turn off the Victrola. CLEOTA comes in, starts clearing away supper plates. ELLEN goes to her, speaks in a low voice*) Cleota, will you get Mr. Turner some bicarbonate of soda from the kitchen? (*CLEOTA nods, retires to the dining room*) Cleota will get him some bicarbonate of soda from the kitchen. He'd never find it upstairs.

JOE (*takes off the record and hunts for another one to his liking*). Why wouldn't he? Where do you keep it?

ELLEN. In the medicine chest.

JOE. What was that stuff between him and Ed?

ELLEN. Oh, it's nothing, really. I'll tell you about it tomorrow. (*Her mind is on TOMMY, upstairs.*)

JOE. Fine. . . . Say, look what I found! "Who?" Remember that, Ellen? (*He puts the record on, starts it. ELLEN moves closer to the Victrola and listens as it plays:*)

"Who-o-o stole my heart away?
Who-o-o makes me dream all day?
Dreams I know can never come true.
Seems as though I'd ever be blue.
Who-o-o means my happiness . . ."

(*As naturally as if they were always dancing to this song, they both begin to dance*) Gee, this takes me back . . . the May dance. Remember?

ELLEN. Um-huh—it rained.

JOE. You said you didn't know it was raining. I know I didn't. (*Holds her closer.*)

ELLEN (*breaks away*). I'm a little rusty, Joe. I haven't danced in—oh, I don't remember when. Makes me feel young.

JOE. Then what are we stopping for? Come on.

ELLEN. Well—all right. (*They go back into the dance. Dreaming, ELLEN glances up at JOE. They slow down to a stop and stand looking at each other, he ardently, she caught up in the music.*)

JOE. I can answer all those questions. . . . No one but you. (*As the music goes into the instrumental reprise, JOE kisses her, and she kisses back for a long moment, then tries to pull away.*)

ELLEN (*as he tries to kiss her again*). Oh, no, Joe, please, I . . . Say, how many cocktails did I have? (*They stand for an instant, looking at each other.*)

[*Off-stage we hear:*]

MYRTLE. Ed, come away from that ice cream. You've had enough.

[*JOE and ELLEN quietly start dancing again, smiling.*]

ED. Oh—all right.

[*TOMMY, a little pale and disheveled, comes down the stairs and sees them dancing there; he stops; MYRTLE and ED enter.*]

MYRTLE (*nudging ED*). Look, Ed! Just like the old days, isn't it? Seeing them dancing together?

ED. I'll say. (*Then, loudly*) They make a darn' handsome couple, don't they?

[*TOMMY, although he has not seen the kiss, has sensed the whole intimacy of the scene and the meaning of ED's remark; he nods soberly.*]

JOE. She dances like a dream.

ED (*chuckling*). Like a "dream can never come true," eh, Joe? You look mighty sweet in there, boy.

[*ELLEN sees TOMMY. Following her glance, ED, MYRTLE and JOE turn and look at TOMMY.*]

ELLEN (*breaking away*). Oh—Tommy—are you all right?

TOMMY (*coming down*). Yes, thanks. . . . Don't—let me spoil the party.

ED. Party's breaking up anyway, Tommy.

[JOE *turns off Victrola.*]

TOMMY. I just thought I'd get some more air. . . . (*Crosses to the door which leads out to the garden.*)

ED. I don't want to miss any of that rally. (*A band is heard in the distance, approaching. Holds out MYRTLE's coat*) Myrtle!

[MYRTLE *crosses to him.*]

[PATRICIA *enters from dining room with bicarbonate of soda in glass.*]

PATRICIA. Who's this for, Ellen?

ELLEN. Tommy. (*To TOMMY, as he stands with his back turned, breathing the fresh air*) Tommy, will you take this bicarbonate?

TOMMY. Just—put it by for a moment. You go to the rally, Ellen. . . . I'm going to walk around out here—until I feel better. Good night, everybody. . . . You're coming to lunch tomorrow, aren't you, Joe?

JOE. Yes, sir!

TOMMY. That's what I thought. (*He goes out, closing the screen door. PATRICIA looks out the window; the band is heard louder.*)

PATRICIA. Ellen! It's the team and the band and a lot of the kids! They must be going in the Neil Avenue gate!

ED. Come on, let's step on it!

JOE. Yeh. (*Listens to music*) Boy, that sounds good! God, doesn't that take you back?

MYRTLE. Where'll we go after the rally?

JOE. I'll take you all to the Dixie Club! Whatta ya say, Ellen?

ELLEN. Oh, I haven't been there in years! It would be fun. . . . But, no, I'm not going. (*Calls*) I'm going to stay here with you, Tommy.

TOMMY (*off-stage*). No, I'd rather you didn't—really.

PATRICIA (*as music gets much louder*). Hey! They're stopping in front of the house!

[WALLY *runs in as the music stops.*]

WALLY. Ready, Pat?

PATRICIA. Sure!

[*Breathless and excited, WALLY goes to JOE.*]

WALLY. Look, we brought the band over to escort you to the chapel, Mr. Ferguson! You're going to ride in the Axline Buggy!

ED. The Axline Buggy!

WALLY. We hauled it out of the trophy room! We got two horses—not the old black ones, but we got two horses! Whatta ya say?

ED. Fine! Fine!

[NUTSY *runs in, dressed in a band-leader's uniform and carrying his glistening baton.*]

NUTSY. Hey, come on! Let's get going! The carriage waits, Mr. Ferguson! (*Does drum major's salute and clicks heels.*)

WALLY. This is Nutsy Miller, the leader of the band.

JOE (*shaking hands*). Hiya, Nutsy?

NUTSY. Hiya, Joe?

JOE. Okay, fellas! Whatta ya say, Ellen—you ride with me. Some fun, huh?

ELLEN (*in the spirit of it*). Oh—all right. Hurray!

JOE. Hit her, Ed!

ED, JOE, WALLY, ELLEN, PATRICIA, NUTSY (*sing*).

“And if we win the game,
We’ll buy a keg of booze,
And we’ll drink to old Midwestern
Till we wobble in our shoes.”

[*They all go out, JOE and ELLEN the center of the gay, excited group, arm in arm. A shout goes up as JOE appears outside. You hear a triple “rah-team” for JOE.*]

VOICES (*outside*).

Rah-rah-rah!

Rah-rah-rah!

Rah-rah-rah!

Ferguson! Ferguson! Ferguson!

[*The band starts another march. TOMMY has reappeared in the lower door a moment after the general exit. He crosses slowly and closes upper door. The cheers for FERGUSON and the band music slowly die away as TOMMY turns and sees the glass of soda. He picks it up, looks at it in distaste—distaste for himself.*]

TOMMY. Rah-rah-rah! (*He throws down the spoon, crosses to the Victrola and starts the record.*)

VICTROLA. “. . . Dreams I know can never come true. . . .”

[*TOMMY listens for a moment, then makes awkwardly, solemnly, a couple of dance steps, frowns, shakes his head, and drops onto settee, giving it up. He drinks the bitter cup of soda as the music ends and the*

CURTAIN FALLS]

ACT TWO

SCENE I

The Turners' living room—same as Act I.

About one o'clock the following day.

AT RISE: JOE, with coat off, is arranging plates, knives, saucers and forks on the floor in the form of a football formation. The end table has evidently been used for serving luncheon as it still holds a plate and cup. ELLEN is seated center, finishing her coffee and watching JOE. PATRICIA is down on her knees on the floor studying the array of dishes, napkins, salt cellars, and glasses which are ankle-deep around JOE. CLEOTA enters from the dining room, carrying an

empty tray. She crosses to the end table, begins clearing away the dishes, keeping a suspicious eye on JOE and the black magic he is up to.)

JOE. Now here—it's a balanced line. Move those two men out a little more. (*PAT moves the men out*) This is a wonderful play! The coach gave it to me in the strictest confidence.

ELLEN. Cleota, did you phone Mr. Turner's office again?

CLEOTA (*at end table, clearing away dishes*). Yessum. Dey ain' no answeh.

PATRICIA. I saw Tommy, Ellen—about an hour ago.

ELLEN. Where?

PATRICIA. He was walking out on the little road back of the Ag buildings. Just moping along. I yelled at him, but he didn't hear me.

ELLEN. I'm getting worried.

JOE (*intent on his own activity*). Everything's going to be okay. Nothing to worry about. . . . Now, study this play, girls, or you won't know it when you see it this afternoon. This is Michigan. And this is Midwestern. . . . Now! From the balanced line, we shift. Hup! (*He executes a Notre Dame shift, grimaces a little as his right knee resents this activity*) Wally takes the left-end's place, but he plays out a little.

[*PATRICIA exchanges cup and cream pitcher.*]

PATRICIA. Isn't Wally going to carry the ball?

JOE. Shh. Michigan spreads out. They're watching that wide end, but it's too obvious. They're watching the other side of the line, too.

CLEOTA (*moving down, wide-eyed*). What's goin' on heah?

ELLEN. Football game!

JOE (*ignoring her*). The ball is snapped back. Now look, here we go! Both of us. . . . (*Carrying a plate and a napkin*) Close together. Fading back, but threatening a left-end run as well as a pass.

PATRICIA. But who are you?

JOE. I'm both of them—Lindstrom and Wierasocka . . . (*Comes forward*) Skolsky cuts down the left side line deep and takes out Wupperman—that's the jam pot. (*He picks up "Wally"*) Wally is running wide around right end (*Runs around end*) faking as though he had the ball but hasn't really got it—apparently! . . . Now, then, just as Michigan is charging in on Lindstrom and Wierasocka, trying to decide which one has the ball, Wally lets himself out! *He's really got it!*

PATRICIA. Hooray!

JOE. It's a fake fake. It's an old play, so corny only a football genius like Coach Sprague would use it. With no interference at all, Wally cuts over and goes straight down the right side of the field! He stiff-arms the safety man . . . (*Running with the cream pitcher*) Touchdown!

PATRICIA. Whoopee! (*She knocks over the jam pot*) Oh, God, there goes Wupperman!

[*During JOE's "touchdown," TOMMY has appeared quietly in the door to the back yard. He watches JOE with distaste. No one notices him in the confusion.*]

CLEOTA. Um-hm. You through playin' now?

[PATRICIA and JOE help her pick up the dishes.]

PATRICIA. I'm sorry, Ellen.

ELLEN. It's all right. You can take the teams to the showers now, Cleota. Can't she, Joe?

JOE. Sure. How do you like it?

ELLEN. I think it's nice.

JOE. Nice?! It's marvelous! That play is going to put us in the Rose Bowl. (To PATRICIA) Did I ever tell you about how we used the Statue of Liberty play? (*He uses a cream pitcher as a football*) I would go back for a pass, and Jonesy would take it out of my hand and cut around to the left . . . (*He loses himself in the play, then suddenly realizes that not the imaginary ball but the cream pitcher has been taken out of his hand and that there is no Jonesy. He looks around slowly, puzzled, too late to have seen TOMMY quietly returning to the outdoors with the pitcher which he has snatched from JOE's hand. Doorbell rings.*)

ELLEN. I'll answer it. (*She goes to the front door. JOE looks to see where he might have dropped the pitcher; he is vastly puzzled.*)

PATRICIA. It's a wonderful play, Mr. Ferguson. If it works. (*She runs upstairs.*)

JOE. The coach gave it to me in strictest confidence. (*He gives another look for the pitcher with the expression of a prize bloodhound who has lost a scent. ELLEN admits DEAN DAMON.*)

ELLEN. Can you come in and wait, Dr. Damon? Tommy is out somewhere, but I'm expecting him back.

[CLEOTA goes out with the tray and dishes, leaving the coffee things on a table.]

DAMON. I can't wait very long. (*Indicates the magazine in his pocket.*)

ELLEN. Is that *The Literary Magazine*?

DAMON. It's a powder magazine. The bombs are bursting all around. (*He sees JOE, who has been putting on his coat and looking in the door drapes for the lost pitcher*) Oh—good afternoon.

JOE. How are you, Dr. Damon?

[*The phone rings.*]

ELLEN. Excuse me—I'll . . . (*She goes to the phone*) Hello. . . . Yes, thank you. That was Ed Keller's office, Joe. He's on his way over here.

JOE. Oh, yeah. He called me this morning. He's fit to be tied about this literary magazine thing. Have you seen it?

DAMON. Yes. This is it.

JOE. May I take a look at it? Gosh, I didn't realize what this thing was—(*He takes the magazine and scans the editorial*) Calls the trustees Fascists! This kid's dangerous—un-American.

DAMON. Oh, no.

ELLEN. Oh, no, not really. He's from an old Chillicothe family.

JOE. This is bad stuff for the university. I'm afraid all hell's going to break loose. Of course, it's none of my business, but . . .

DAMON (*taking the magazine out of JOE's hand*). You take the words right

out of my mouth. It's been a very trying morning. I haven't had such a day since poor Dr. Prendergast shot his secretary.

JOE. Well, I'm not a trustee, but I know how they feel.

ELLEN (*anxiously*). I know.

JOE. Tommy'd better deny this, pretty fast, and get himself out in the clear, I'm telling you. I'm sorry about this, Ellen. Where is Tommy?

ELLEN. I don't know.

JOE. You don't think— (*He lowers his voice*) You don't think he may be a little sore about your going out with me last night?

ELLEN. I don't know. Oh, Joe, I'm all upset.

[*The doorbell rings.*]

JOE. Shall I open it? (*He does*) Hi, Ed.

ED (*off-stage*). Turner here?

ELLEN. No, he isn't.

[*ED appears in the doorway.*]

ED (*sternly*). Well, I want to see him before the game. Tell him to call my office. Coming, Joe?

ELLEN (*quickly*). I don't know just when he'll . . . Won't you come in? Dr. Damon is here.

ED. Oh. (*He comes into the room a few steps. JOE closes the door*) Well, I'm glad somebody's here. How do you do, sir? Do you know where I could find President Cartwright?

DAMON. His secretary informed me that he is at the barber shop having his beard trimmed.

ED (*his anger going up fast*). That'll be a big help! I thought Turner was going to deny this story. Papers keep calling *me*—they say he hasn't. Here I am, bearing the brunt of this damn disgraceful attack. "Fascists!" You oughtta heard Si McMillan! And do you know Kressinger's in town from Detroit?

ELLEN. Is he a trustee, too?

DAMON. Oh, yes, young Michael has exploded his dynamite at a moment when the concentration of trustees is at its thickest.

ED. Yeh. There goes the new stadium. There goes your Endowment Fund! Unless something is done, and done quick! (*He turns on ELLEN, with a roar*) Ellen, you tell your husband what I said!

JOE (*moving in*). Look, Ed, it isn't Ellen's fault.

ED (*between fury and tears*). It isn't my fault, either. I kept this whole week end free. I got my office full of eighteen-year-old Bourbon so we fellows could cut loose a little. And look what happens! All we need now is for Wierasocka to fumble a punt! (*He stomps out of the house.*)

JOE. I'll—see you later. (*He goes out after ED.*)

DAMON. I didn't like the way Mr. Keller said "There goes your Endowment Fund." (*The phone rings*) If that's the newspapers I'm not here.

ELLEN. Oh, I don't want to talk to them either. Cleota—

[*As the phone rings again, PATRICIA runs down the stairs.*]

PATRICIA (*angrily*). I'm going out to talk to Michael! I got him on the phone

but he hung up on me! Good afternoon, Dr. Damon. I'll knock his ears off.
(*She slams out the door. The phone rings on.*)

DAMON. Good afternoon, Patricia.

[CLEOTA enters from the dining room.]

ELLEN. Answer the phone, Cleota.

CLEOTA (*picking up the receiver cautiously*). Hello. . . . Says what? . . . Say, he *is*? . . . Ah didn' say you said he was, Ah say what is it? . . . No, he ain' heah. . . . No, dis ain' Miz Turner. (*She is getting a little surly.*)

ELLEN. *Who is calling, please!*

CLEOTA. Who's dis? . . . Wait a minute. . . . (*She puts her hand over the mouthpiece. To ELLEN*) It's de Daily sumpin'.

ELLEN. Hang up, Cleota.

CLEOTA (*brightly*). G'bye. (*She hangs up and exits.*)

ELLEN. Oh, Lord, see what's happened already! Dr. Damon, suppose Tommy *didn't* read this letter?

DAMON. Let us not take refuge in conditional clauses.

ELLEN. Would *you* read it if you were Tommy?

DAMON. Now we go into the subjunctive. My dear, for forty-two years I have read nothing to *my* classes which was written later than the first half of the seventeenth century.

ELLEN. There must be some way—some compromise—that wouldn't be too humiliating.

DAMON. The policy of appeasement? Yes, it has its merits. (*He rises*) I can't wait any longer for Thomas. Tell him that if he decides not to read the letter, I shall feel easier in my mind. Much easier. (*He picks up his hat*) And—slightly disappointed. . . . Good afternoon, my dear. . . . (*He opens the door, and in flies PATRICIA. They collide*) Wup, wup, wup!

PATRICIA. Don't let Michael in! I don't want to talk to him any more!

DAMON. Did you—uh—knock his ears off?

PATRICIA (*loudly*). I got him told! But he wants to tell me *his* side. He thinks *he* has a side.

DAMON (*quietly*). A common failing, my dear. . . . Good afternoon. (*He goes out and PATRICIA bolts the door after him, hotly.*)

PATRICIA. There, I've bolted that young genius out! Oh, Ellen! Give me a football player any time. (*She crosses to her sister for comfort*) Give me a guy without so much intellect or whatever it is. Somebody that doesn't want to be bawling the world out all the time—always doing something brave or fine or something. (MICHAEL, *greatly upset, steps into the room from the back yard*) Go away!

ELLEN. Quiet down, Patricia. . . . Come in, Michael.

MICHAEL (*to PATRICIA*). You're being very silly.

ELLEN (*noticing MICHAEL's distraught look*). Can I give you a glass of milk?

MICHAEL. No, thank you. She won't listen to me, Mrs. Turner. I'm not trying to ruin your husband's life or my life or anybody's life. It's the principle of the thing she won't see.

PATRICIA. Oh, the principle! (*She stomps over to him*) I'll bet nobody else

would make a fool of himself and his friends and—my brother-in-law—over a principle.

[ELLEN, *taking the dishes with her, quietly slips out to the kitchen, unnoticed by MICHAEL.*]

MICHAEL (*with the enormous gravity of the young man in love*). All right, Pat. I'm very glad to know the qualities you admire in a man. They are certainly the noble virtues, and I'm sure Wally is lousy with them.

PATRICIA. Oh, make up your mind who you're imitating, Ralph Waldo Emerson or Hemingway! You—you *writer*!

MICHAEL. Now who's imitating Hemingway?

PATRICIA. I wish you'd go away!

MICHAEL (*rushing to the front door*). I'm going! I'm going for good! I'm going out of your life! (*On the last word he jerks at the door to make a dramatic exit, but it won't open, since PATRICIA bolted it. The door-knob comes off in his hand.*)

PATRICIA (*going out the lower door to the porch*). It's bolted, you dope!
[MICHAEL gets the door open finally and in walks an extremely puzzled TOMMY with the other door-knob in his hand. The two stand and look at each other.]

MICHAEL (*a little guiltily*). Sorry, Mr. Turner!

TOMMY. What's going on here?

[MICHAEL puts his knob in and TOMMY screws the other knob on.]

MICHAEL. I was just going.

TOMMY. That's all right. Come in, if you want to.

MICHAEL (*noticing TOMMY's haggard look*). Say, you look terrible.

TOMMY. Me? Why, what's the matter?

MICHAEL (*his mind on his own woes*). I've got to get out of here.

TOMMY. Why? Did somebody do something to you?

MICHAEL. Patricia. She did plenty. I suppose it's just as well. I've found out what she wants in life: a handsome, half-witted half-back.

TOMMY. Yes, I know how that feels.

MICHAEL. Yes, sir. Well, you can't get anywhere with a woman who doesn't understand what you have to do.

TOMMY. No. No, you can't, Michael. You'd like to, but you can't. . . . Good-bye, Michael. . . . (*He shakes hands with MICHAEL, grimly*) Come back in about an hour, will you? I want to give you a piece of my mind.

MICHAEL (*puzzled*). Yes, sir. (*He goes slowly out the front door, as TOMMY takes the picture he snatched from JOE out of his overcoat pocket. TOMMY sits sadly, and sighs as ELLEN enters.*)

ELLEN. Oh, hello, darling!

TOMMY. Hello.

ELLEN (*uneasily*). Well, I'm glad you remembered where you live. I was beginning to be worried. We phoned your office three times, but nobody knew where you were.

TOMMY (*looking up slowly*). Huh?

ELLEN. I say nobody knew where you were—since early this morning.

TOMMY. I was walking.

ELLEN. Without any breakfast? All this time?

TOMMY. Well, I—came around to the back door a while ago, but Joe was doing the Statue of Liberty or something again, so I went away.

ELLEN. You were right here and you went away?

TOMMY. Yes, I couldn't face that right now. Not the Statue of Liberty.

ELLEN. Oh. Well, Dr. Damon's been here—and Ed Keller, and the newspapers have been calling up. There's going to be a lot of trouble if you don't hurry up and deny that story of Michael's—or have you done it?

TOMMY. No—I haven't denied it.

ELLEN (*troubled*). You mean you've made up your mind to read it? Is that what you've been—walking around for? Tommy, I don't know what to say to you.

TOMMY. I think maybe you've said enough already.

ELLEN. That isn't very kind.

TOMMY. None of this is going to sound very kind but I've figured out exactly what I want to say, and I have to get it out before I get all mixed up.

ELLEN. I don't see why you are being so mean.

TOMMY. It's just that last night I began to see you, and myself, clearly for the first time.

ELLEN. If this is a story you're writing, and you're trying it out on me, it isn't very good.

TOMMY. Oh, I saw you and Joe clearly, too.

ELLEN (*relieved, crosses to TOMMY*). Oh, you saw him kiss me. . . . I thought that was it. . . .

TOMMY. No. . . . No, I didn't. . . . Did he kiss you? Well, that's fine. . . . I've been meaning to ask you, what became of Housman's "Last Poems"? (*He turns to the bookshelves.*)

ELLEN. Tommy (*She puts her hand on his shoulder*), listen to me. . . . I wanted to have a good time last night, and you spoiled it. . . .

TOMMY. Didn't you enjoy it at all?

ELLEN (*piqued*). Yes, I did. I'm not a hundred years old—yet. I just decided to quit worrying about you and have a little fun. For about an hour I felt like a girl again—wearing flowers at a Spring dance—when I was young and silly. . . .

TOMMY. Young and happy.

ELLEN. All right, he . . . kissed me. I kissed him, too. We didn't go out in the dark to do it.

TOMMY (*piling the books he is taking from the bookshelves on the settee*). I hope you didn't lend that book to anybody; it was a first edition.

ELLEN. Did you *hear* what I *said*?

TOMMY. Sure, I heard you. I'm listening. . . . You said you went out in the dark and kissed Joe.

ELLEN. I said no such thing! and you know it.

TOMMY. I wish we had had separate bookplates.

ELLEN (*beginning to flame*). So that when you really make me mad and I get out of here, I can find my own books quickly?

TOMMY. I hate sentimental pawing over things by a couple breaking up. We're not living in the days of Henry James and Meredith. Look at Joe and his wife.

ELLEN. Tommy. (*She goes to him again*) I want you to stop this. If you're going to be jealous *be* jealous, rave or throw things, but don't act like the lead in a senior-class play! (*This thrust gets home.*)

TOMMY (*angrily*). I'm trying to tell you that I don't care what you and Joe do! I'm trying to tell you that it's fine! It's very lucky that he came back just now.

ELLEN. Why, what do you mean?

TOMMY. I mean on the money *I* make, I can go on fine alone, reading whatever I want to to my classes! That's what I want! And that's what I'm going to do.

ELLEN. Oh, that's what you want! Suddenly that's what you want. More than me?

TOMMY. It isn't so sudden. Not any more sudden than your feeling for Joe. It's logical. We get in each other's way. You wear yourself out picking up after me. Taking matches out of my pockets. Disarranging my whole way of life. (*She follows him as he moves away from her.*)

ELLEN. Why haven't you said all this before?

TOMMY. I couldn't very well.

ELLEN. Why couldn't you? If you felt this way?

TOMMY. Well, we hadn't split up on this letter issue, for one thing—and then there was no place for you to go. (*He sits on a sofa*) I didn't want you to have to go back to Cleveland, or to work in some tea shoppe!

ELLEN. Oh, I see. Some tea shoppe! That's what you think I'd have to do! Well, you needn't have spared my feelings. I can make as much money as you!

TOMMY. You don't have to, now.

ELLEN (*whirling*). Oh, you mean you waited to tell me all this till Joe came along! I thought you were jealous of Joe. I could understand that. You aren't the least bit aroused at the idea of his kissing me—*out in the dark—for hours!*

TOMMY. No, I'm not.

ELLEN (*full of exclamation points*). So that's why you've been wandering around! That's what you've been figuring out! How nice it would be if he would take me off your hands, so you could be left alone with your books and match boxes and *litter!* I suppose any man would do as well as Joe! (*She rushes up to him.*)

TOMMY (*rising to face her*). He's not just any man, and you know that! He's always been in love with you, and you've always been in love with him! (*He is angry and jealous now and brings up his own exclamation points.*)

ELLEN. That's ridiculous!

TOMMY (*moving toward her*). I felt it when I saw you dancing together. It was unmistakable. You've just admitted it.

ELLEN. Oh, you can't do that *now*! You can't be jealous *now*, just because you think I want you to be!

TOMMY (*rising to his big denunciation*). I saw you dancing together—like angels! I saw you go out in that goddamn carriage together! I saw you together years ago, when I was young enough and dumb enough to believe that I really took you away from him. There's something that happens when you two dance together that doesn't happen when *we* dance together!

ELLEN (*worried, angry and tired*). All right—have it your way. If you want to be free, then I want to be free—and I've gone around for ten years mooning about Joe. . . . Well, maybe I have—maybe I have, because I'm certainly sick of you right now! (*She whirls away from him.*)

TOMMY (*deathly afraid of her being sick of him*). Ellen . . . Ellen, listen!

ELLEN. Never mind—all right—all right—ALL RIGHT! (*She is shouting as JOE enters brightly.*)

JOE. Oh, I'm sorry—if I . . . (*He stops in embarrassment. There is a pause. He has caught only the tone; but he sees and feels the tension. He is carrying a wrapped bottle and a newspaper.*)

TOMMY. Hello, Joe.

JOE. Hello. I brought the rum. (*He crosses to the coffee table, puts the bottle on the table; holds up the newspaper*) Big picture of Wally all over the front page. (*ELLEN stares out the window, TOMMY stares at JOE*) Good picture, isn't it?

TOMMY. You and Ellen have some rum.

JOE. The rum's for the punch—later.

ELLEN. Could I have some—now?

[TOMMY goes out to dining room.]

JOE (*surprised*). Right now? Sure.

TOMMY (*yelling from dining room*). I'll get you some glasses. (*He reappears with two glasses.*)

JOE (*unscrewing the top of the rum bottle*). Tommy, old man, I just left Ed Keller and Si McMillan. This thing your young friend wrote in the magazine. (*Pours a drink*) I read that piece over again. He's got you on a spot, Tommy. (*He gives ELLEN her drink.*)

ELLEN. Want to drink a toast, Joe? To Tommy's happiness?

[JOE looks at both of them.]

JOE (*puzzled*). Sure. . . . (*Pours himself a drink*) Your happiness, Tommy. (*They drink amid a long silence, JOE nervously finishing his, ELLEN taking a long drink, grimacing as it burns her throat. JOE decides to dive in*) What's the matter? What's it about? Maybe I could talk to Ed . . .

TOMMY. No. I don't want that. I'll run my own life my own way.

ELLEN. That's what it's about. Tommy wants to—live alone.

JOE. What?

ELLEN. He wants to be left alone. . . .

JOE. I beg your pardon?

ELLEN (*almost shouting*). Us! Tommy and me! We're breaking up!

JOE (*awed*). Just before the game? You're both crazy! Maybe I better go.

TOMMY. Not at all. You're not exactly a stranger around here. You knew Ellen as long ago as I did.

JOE. I knew her a long time before you did . . . and this is a hell of a way to be treating her.

TOMMY (*baiting a hook*). Yes, I know. I was just saying I barged in and took her away from you.

[ELLEN stares at TOMMY.]

JOE (*taking the bait*). Oh, no, you didn't! You had nothing to do with it. She got sore at me on account of another girl.

TOMMY (*triumphantly*). Oh, *that's* where I came in?

JOE. Sure. If you think you took her away from me, you're crazy. Here, you better have some rum.

ELLEN (*the wife*). He can't drink this early.

TOMMY. I don't *need* any rum. Go on, Joe.

JOE (*sitting near TOMMY*). Well, Ellen and I had a fight. You weren't in on it. You came in later. . . .

ELLEN (*wearily, also warily*). Joe, do we have to . . .

TOMMY. It's all right. It's his turn.

JOE. She said she hated me and never wanted to see me again. She threw something at me. She thought I slept with this girl—I mean . . .

TOMMY (*coolly*). I know what you mean. . . .

ELLEN (*indignantly*). I never said you *sl* . . . I never said that.

JOE (*turning from TOMMY to ELLEN*). Oh, yes, you did—you intimated it.

ELLEN. No, that was *your* idea. I thought you were bragging about it!

JOE (*turning farther away from TOMMY*). Well, you got awfully mad. I thought you never did want to see me again. I guess I was dumb. Brenda says it shows you liked me. (*From ELLEN's expression, JOE is reminded of TOMMY's presence. He turns to TOMMY, a little sheepishly*) Oh—sorry.

TOMMY (*the tolerant man of the world*). Oh, don't mind me. Who's Brenda? Another girl?

JOE. My wife.

TOMMY. Oh, sorry.

JOE. Ellen knows her. She's from Cleveland. Brenda's always been jealous of Ellen. She found a picture of you.

TOMMY (*not so tolerant*). What picture?

ELLEN. I gave him a picture. He wouldn't give it back.

JOE. It's a swell picture. You were wearing that floppy hat. Red.

ELLEN. Blue.

JOE. It had ribbons. Made you look like you were sixteen.

TOMMY. *I've* never seen it.

ELLEN. It was a silly hat. That was ages ago.

TOMMY. I mean, I've never seen the picture.

ELLEN (*angrily*). I threw them all away.

JOE (*looking back over the years*). It kind of went down over one eye.

TOMMY (*remembering an old lovely hat*). She looks nice in hats like that

[ELLEN suddenly begins to cry and collapses on the sofa.]

JOE (*rising*). Now look what you've done!

TOMMY (*rising*). Look what *you've* done! Bringing up old floppy blue hats! (JOE *moves to ELLEN*) Don't touch her! She doesn't like to be touched when she's crying.

JOE. I've seen her cry. I know what to do.

TOMMY. Oh, you do?

JOE. She cried when we had that fight about the girl. She was lying on the floor and crying and kicking—on her stomach.

ELLEN. I was not!

TOMMY. Be careful what you say!

JOE. Well, I mean I knew what to do. (*Crosses to other end of sofa*) I picked her up that time.

TOMMY (*following him*). Well, you're not going to pick her up now.

ELLEN. Will you both please let me alone?! Will you please go away!

JOE (*getting sore*). She wants you to go away. And I don't blame her, if this is the way you treat her. I wouldn't have stood for it ten years ago, and I'm not going to stand for it now.

TOMMY. But what are you going to do?

JOE. I'm going to get her away from all this! It isn't *nice*!

TOMMY. It isn't exactly to my taste, either. I didn't want it to turn out this way, but it did. Ellen crying, me feeling like a cad, and you acting like a fool.

JOE. *Me* acting like a fool?

ELLEN (*sitting up*). Everybody's acting like a fool.

JOE. You've certainly messed things up, brother.

TOMMY. Don't call me brother! I can't stand that now.

JOE. If Ellen weren't here, I'd call you worse than brother!

ELLEN. Well, I'm not going to be here! Please, please stop—both of you! Nobody has said a word about what I want to do. You're going to settle that between yourselves. Bandyng me back and forth!

TOMMY. Nobody's bandying you, Ellen.

ELLEN (*mad*). I know when I'm being bandied! (*On her feet*) I don't want either of you! You can both go to hell! (*She runs upstairs, crying.*)

[*Both men follow and look after her.*]

TOMMY. She means me.

JOE. She said both of us.

TOMMY. She was looking at me.

JOE. How did we get into this, anyway?

TOMMY. You two-stepped into it. You kissed your way into it.

JOE. I'm sorry about that. Sorry it happened.

TOMMY. You're not sorry it happened. You're sorry I found it out. Do you know anything about women? Didn't you know what she was thinking about when she was dancing with you?

JOE. No. I don't think when I'm dancing.

TOMMY. I know. You think in your office. Well, you'll have to think in your home after this. She likes to be thought about.

JOE. I thought about her. I remembered her birthday. I brought her flowers.

TOMMY. Well, you'll have to keep on bringing her things whether it's her birthday or not. Fur coats and—things. She's still young and pretty.

JOE (*narrowing his eyes*). I don't get you.

TOMMY. I'm being broadminded. I'm taking things in my stride. It's the modern way of doing things. You ought to know that.

JOE (*shrewdly*). Um, hm. But what makes me think you're still crazy about her and are up to some goddamn something or other?

TOMMY (*a little taken aback*). Don't be acute. I couldn't stand you being acute.

JOE. I'm not dumb.

TOMMY. Yes, you are. It isn't what *I* feel that counts. It's what *she* feels. I think she's always been in love with you. Why, I don't know. It's supposed to be beyond reason. I guess it is.

JOE. You think that just because of last night?

TOMMY. No. Because of what lay behind last night. That wasn't just a kiss. That's nothing. This thing is too deep for jealousy or for anything but honesty. A woman must not go on living with a man when she dances better with another man.

JOE. That's silly! *That's the silliest . . . !* Dancing doesn't mean everything!

TOMMY. The way *you* do it does. The thing that happens to you. The *light* you give off.

JOE. *Light?!*

TOMMY. Oh, these things are too subtle for you, Joe. I've made some study of them. (*Turns away.*)

JOE. Maybe all this studying's bad for you.

TOMMY (*pinning him down*). All I want to know is whether you felt the same thing she felt last night.

JOE. I felt fine. This is goddamn embarrassing! A man makes love to a woman. He doesn't talk it over with her husband!

TOMMY. I'm just trying to be honest.

JOE. You're a funny guy. Conscientious. What does it get you? Like this letter you're going to read. . . . Say, is that what started the trouble?

TOMMY. Yes, it's an integral part of the trouble—things like that.

JOE. Well, what are we going to do? I mean now? I mean from now on?

TOMMY. From now on will work itself out. Right now you'd better go upstairs and comfort her. She'll be expecting you.

JOE. Oh, no. Not me! You ought to know more what to do right now. It's your house. She's your wife.

TOMMY. She doesn't want to talk to me. She's just done that. But she oughtn't to be left alone right now.

JOE (*rises*). Well— (*He takes a few steps*) What'll I say?

TOMMY. What did you say last night, when you were dancing?

JOE (*going to the foot of the stairs*). It doesn't seem right somehow for me to go upstairs.

TOMMY. This is not a moment for cheap moralizing!

JOE. Well—good God almighty! (*He goes upstairs.*)

[MICHAEL *has come in the front door in time to hear JOE's last expletive.*]

MICHAEL (*as TOMMY looks after JOE*). What's the matter?

TOMMY. Never mind. . . . (*He paces, glares upstairs, still has his glare when he turns back to MICHAEL.*)

MICHAEL. Well, I came back like you said. Before you start in on me, Mr. Turner, please remember that I've been through a lot today. I can't stand much more. (*TOMMY pats him on shoulder. Gloomily*) They'll probably do something to you—especially if we lose to Michigan. You know what Keller did the last time they beat us in a Homecoming Game? He ran the flag on his office building down to half-mast.

TOMMY (*looking upstairs—distracted*). Don't worry about me.

MICHAEL. Well, I'm feeling better. I've put her out of my mind. It's ended as simply as that. (*He drops into a chair*) There's a girl who could sit with you and talk about Shelley. Well, I'm glad I found out about women. (*Crash upstairs*) What was that?

TOMMY. I'm sure I don't know. What were you saying?

MICHAEL. I say Patricia knew things. She knew odd things like "A Sonnet on Political Greatness." She quoted that one night. Wouldn't you think a girl like that had some social consciousness?

TOMMY. That's the sonnet that ends:

"Quelling the anarchy of hopes and fears,
Being himself alone."

MICHAEL. Yes, but when an issue comes up and a man has to be himself alone, she reveals the true stature of her character and goes off to Hennick's with that football player. I saw them—right in the front window—drinking Seven-Up. He uses a straw.

TOMMY. Yes, but he's handsome. What is more, he whirls. He's a hunter. He comes home at night with meat slung over his shoulders, and you sit there drawing pictures on the wall of your cave.

MICHAEL. I see. Maybe I ought to sock him with a ball-bat.

TOMMY. No. You are a civilized man, Michael. If the male animal in you doesn't like the full implications of that, he must nevertheless be swayed by Reason. You are not living in the days of King Arthur when you fought for your woman. Nowadays, the man and his wife and the other man talk it over. Quietly and calmly. They all go out to dinner together. (*He sits on the sofa across the stage from MICHAEL.*)

MICHAEL. Intellectually, Patricia is sleeping with that guy. I feel like going out tonight with the Hot Garters.

TOMMY. With the what?

MICHAEL. It's a girl. They call her that. What if she was kicked out of the Pi Phi House? She's honest! She does what she believes in! And—well, Hot Garters doesn't argue all the time anyway.

TOMMY (*removing his glasses*). Look, hasn't she got a name? You don't call her *that*, do you?

MICHAEL. Marcia Gardner. They just call her . . .

TOMMY. Yes, you told me what they call her.

[*Slight pause.*]

MICHAEL. Patricia's not coming to class when you read that letter. She's gone over to the Philistines. . . . Oh, God, Mr. Turner, I wish I were like you! Middle-aged, settled down, happily married—and through with all this hell you feel when you're young and in love.

TOMMY (*nettled*). Middle-aged?

MICHAEL. Yes, you know what Rupert Brooke says:

“That time when all is over. . . .

(TOMMY *writhes, turns his back*)

And love has turned to kindliness.”

Is kindliness peaceful?

TOMMY. Don't ask *me*. (*Two quick crashes from upstairs bring TOMMY to his feet just as JOE hurries down the stairs, looking worn and worried, his hair slightly disarranged. Sharply*) You look ruffled!

JOE (*just as sharply, but a bit absently*). What? (*The two men look each other over.*)

TOMMY. I say—what ruffled you?

JOE. Do we have to discuss these things in front of this boy?

MICHAEL (*rising*). I am not a boy.

TOMMY. This is Michael Barnes.

JOE. Oh, so you're the little boy that started all this! I want to tell you that you write too much, you have too much to say, you get too many people into too much trouble. You've not only got Tommy and Ellen involved, but me.

MICHAEL. I don't see how this concerns you, do you, Mr. Turner?

TOMMY. Yes.

MICHAEL. Oh, well, I'll go out and climb a tree, Mr. Turner. I'll come back when this blows over. (*Goes out into the garden.*)

JOE. Oh, God, I wish I was in Pittsburgh! (*He sits heavily in chair vacated by MICHAEL.*)

TOMMY (*eagerly*). What happened?

JOE. Well, old man, I guess you're right. She was pretty bitter—about you. She picked up something you'd given her and threw it against the wall and broke it into a thousand pieces.

TOMMY. What was it?

JOE. I didn't see it till after she threw it.

TOMMY. Oh.

JOE. Every time she mentioned your name, she threw something. Kept me ducking.

TOMMY (*sadly*). I see. (*He, too, sits heavily on the large sofa*) You want to marry Ellen, don't you?

JOE. Well, I always liked her, but I don't like to go through so much. (*Pause*) Are you sure you understand women?

TOMMY. Yes.

JOE. Well, when Ellen and I had that fight about the girl, she threw things

on account of me, and Brenda thinks that meant she was in love with me. Now she throws things on account of *you*.

TOMMY (*after an instant of hope*). In both instances, she threw them at *you*, didn't she?

JOE (*glumly*). Yeh, I guess so.

TOMMY. Well, there you are. What did she say when you left? What was she doing?

JOE. She was in a terrible state. I don't think she'll be able to go to the game. She may have a sick headache for days. What do you do then?

TOMMY (*rises, and goes to dining room with sudden efficiency*). You get her a hot-water bottle. Cleota! Cleota!

CLEOTA (*off-stage*). Yes, suh?

TOMMY (*off-stage*). There's a hot-water bottle out there in the . . . somewhere. Fill it and bring it in, please.

CLEOTA (*off-stage*). Yes, suh.

[TOMMY returns. JOE glances at his wrist watch, rises, and paces across stage.]

JOE. I don't want to miss this game. I sort of wish Stalenkiwicz wasn't laid up, don't you?

TOMMY (*sits on sofa again*). I haven't given it much thought one way or another.

JOE. Of course, Wierasocka's all right, but Stalenkiwicz is a better pass receiver.

TOMMY. Is he? Why?

JOE. I don't know why. He just is. "Why!" (*His pacing has carried him to the door leading to the garden. He remembers the vanishing pitcher and takes one more look, then resumes his prow*) 'Course they may not give Brenda a divorce.

TOMMY. I think they will.

JOE. I don't know.

[CLEOTA comes in with hot-water bottle and towel. She hands them to TOMMY.]

CLEOTA. Is you gotta pain?

TOMMY. No. Oh, thank you.

[CLEOTA retires.]

JOE. I don't suppose we ought to go and leave her.

TOMMY (*going to him with bottle*). Oh, I'm not going. Here. (*Hands him bottle and towel.*)

JOE (*taking it as if it were a baby*). Ow!

TOMMY. Hold it by the end.

JOE. Won't this thing burn her?

TOMMY (*impatiently, showing him*). You wrap the towel around it.

JOE. You shouldn't stay here in the house alone with her, things being the way they are, should you?

TOMMY (*turning away*). Please don't worry about that!

JOE (*looking at the bottle*). I thought these things were different now than they used to be.

TOMMY. What do you mean, different?

JOE. I mean better looking . . . somehow. (*There is a pause during which JOE tries to wrap the towel around the hot-water bottle, but various parts of it insist on remaining exposed. Finally TOMMY crosses down to JOE angrily.*)

TOMMY. Well, why don't you take it up to her?

ELLEN (*coming down the stairs*). It's time to get started, isn't it? (*The two men turn and stare at her, JOE still holding the hot-water bottle. ELLEN is utterly serene, with no sign of tears or hysterics. Washed and powdered, with her hat on, she stands at the foot of the stairs, ready for the game*) Do you realize what time it is? The Kellers will be waiting for us at Esther Baker's. We'll leave the car there and walk to the stadium. It's only a block. (*The men are still staring*) What are you doing with that thing, Joe?

TOMMY. He was going to lie down with it for a while.

JOE. I was not! Here! (*Tries to hand it to TOMMY.*)

TOMMY. I don't want it.

ELLEN. We've got to hurry, Joe. (*Takes the bottle from JOE and puts it on the sofa*) Have you got the tickets?

JOE. Yeh, I've got them. (*Goes to radio*) Say, what number is the game on?

ELLEN. It's around 1210 on the dial. (*As JOE turns on radio and fiddles with dial, ELLEN turns to TOMMY*) Sure you won't go to the game?

TOMMY. Oh, no. . . . (*With shy politeness*) How are you?

ELLEN (*as if surprised at the question*). Me? I'm fine.

[*As JOE keeps fiddling with dials, dance music comes on, then band music.*]

TOMMY. That's good.

JOE. Well, it hasn't started yet—just music. Let's go. (*Gets ELLEN's coat from hook*) This yours?

ELLEN. Yes.

JOE. Well, is it warm enough?

ELLEN. Yes. Oh, it's very warm.

TOMMY (*angrily*). No, it isn't.

[*CLEOTA enters with the thermos, which she gives to TOMMY.*]

CLEOTA. Here's your thermos, Mr. Turner.

TOMMY. Thank you. (*Takes it. CLEOTA goes out.*)

ELLEN. It's a very warm day, anyway, and we'll have the lap robe from the car.

TOMMY. Ellen. (*She goes to him eagerly*) You forgot your thermos bottle. . . . (*His tone is jocular, and he pretends to screw the cap on tighter to cover his hurt*) You'd better make a note of this, Joe. It gets cold in stadiums late in the afternoon. Ellen gets chilly sometimes, so she likes hot coffee. . . . Well, here. (*He hands thermos to ELLEN. JOE nods, goes to the front door, and opens it. ELLEN, who has been staring at TOMMY, suddenly throws the thermos bottle on the floor, then rushes out, passing JOE. JOE looks after her, then comes back to face TOMMY threateningly.*)

JOE. Did you slap her?

TOMMY. No, I kicked her.

JOE. Well, you did something!

[*An ANNOUNCER'S VOICE breaks into the band music.*]

JOE (*torn between interest in the announcement and his aroused chivalry*). Here I get her all calmed down and you make her cry again. I see now what kind of a life she has here. I'm going to take her away from this and keep her away!

TOMMY (*shouting*). All right! Why don't you get started?

JOE (*topping him*). Because I've got a few more things to say to you. First! (*As he takes a breath, the ANNOUNCER'S VOICE comes through clearly.*)

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE. Here comes the Scarlet Stampede now! (*There is a roar of cheering.*)

JOE. My God, they're coming out on the field! We'll miss the kick-off! God damn it!! (*He turns and dashes out the front door. TOMMY stands looking after him as the band blares, and the*

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE. Well, here we are on Midwestern's field on a mighty fine afternoon for a football game. . . . It looks like the Big Day of the year, folks. Neither one of these great teams has lost a game. The Michigan squad is out on the field warming up. They look even bigger than last year. . . .

CURTAIN FALLS

ACT TWO

SCENE II

The Turner living room, two hours later. It is growing dark outside.

TOMMY and MICHAEL are sitting in chairs wide apart, facing the audience, so that they have to turn their heads to see each other. Each has a glass in his hand, and they are sprawled in their chairs, silent, brooding. The room shows indications of quite a bout: a bottle here, a few magazines flung there, a cushion on the floor. TOMMY gets the Scotch bottle, pours a little into MICHAEL's glass, emptying the bottle. He starts to pour some into his own glass, finds the bottle empty so pours some from MICHAEL's glass into his own. Throws the bottle into the wastebasket. There is a pause.

MICHAEL. He is probably still running with that ball. . . .

[*Pause.*]

TOMMY. Quiet—quiet! . . . What time is it?

MICHAEL (*looks at his wrist watch, has trouble seeing it*). It's getting dark.

[*Pause.*]

TOMMY. Do you know the first law of human nature?

MICHAEL. Yes. Self-propagation.

TOMMY. Not any more. That's gone with last year's nightingale.

MICHAEL. Gone with last year's rose.

[*Slight pause.*]

TOMMY. Yes. . . . Defense of the home. . . . Against prowlers and predatory—prowlers. . . . Do you know what the tiger does when the sanctity of his home is jeopardized?

MICHAEL. I know. You told me. He talks it over with the other man, quietly and calmly.

TOMMY. He does not. I am ashamed of you.

MICHAEL. I think we must have another drink—possibly.

TOMMY. All right. Hey! HEY! (*He is pleased with this shouting*) That's the way to talk to 'em. (*He puts back his head and yells*) HEYYY!!

[CLEOTA enters, and turns on the lights.]

CLEOTA. Mistah Turner, what is it?

TOMMY. What do you want? Oh, we should like to have something more to drink.

CLEOTA. They ain' any more to drink. I'll make you some black coffee. (*She goes out.*)

TOMMY (*pause*). What'd she say?

MICHAEL. Nothing.

TOMMY. Where was I?

MICHAEL. Let's see—you were talking about tigers.

TOMMY. Oh, yes. But let us take the wolf. What does he do? I mean, when they come for his mate. He tears 'em to pieces.

MICHAEL. But we are civilized men. Aren't we?

TOMMY. And so does the leopard, and the lion, and the hawk. They tear 'em to pieces. Without a word.

MICHAEL. You had it figured out the other way around a while ago. You said we should give up our women. (TOMMY stands, falters) It's better sitting down. (TOMMY sits.)

TOMMY. Let us say that the tiger wakes up one morning and finds that the wolf has come down on the fold. What does he—? Before I tell you what he does, I will tell you what he does not do.

MICHAEL. Yes, sir.

TOMMY. He does not expose everyone to a humiliating intellectual analysis. He comes out of his corner like this— (*Rises, assuming an awkward fighting pose, fists up, then sits quickly again*) The bull elephant in him is aroused.

MICHAEL (*plaintively*). Can't you stick to one animal?

TOMMY. No, that's my point. All animals are the same, including the human being. We are male animals, too. (MICHAEL stares at him, bewildered.)

MICHAEL. You said . . .

TOMMY. Even the penguin. (*His voice shows some emotion as he thinks of the penguin*) He stands for no monkey-business where his mate is concerned. Swans have been known to drown scotties who threatened their nests.

MICHAEL. I don't think so.

TOMMY. There it is, in us always, though it may be asleep. The male animal. The mate. When you are married long enough, you become a mate. . . . Think of the sea-lion for a minute.

MICHAEL. All right.

TOMMY. His mate is lying there in a corner of the cave on a bed of tender boughs or something. (*Turns to MICHAEL for confirmation*) Is that all right, "tender boughs"?

MICHAEL. Yeah!

TOMMY (*illustrating by a gesture, a great seal, or eel*). Now, who comes swimming quietly in through the early morning mist, sleek and powerful, dancing and whirling and throwing kisses?

MICHAEL. Joe Ferguson.

TOMMY. And what do I do?

MICHAEL. You say, "Hello."

TOMMY (*in self-disgust*). The sea-lion knows better. He snarls. He gores. He roars with his antlers. He knows that love is a thing you do something about. He knows it is a thing that words can kill. You do something. You don't just sit there. (*MICHAEL rises*) I don't mean you. (*MICHAEL sits*) A woman likes a man who does something. All the male animals fight for the female, from the land crab to the bird of paradise. They don't just sit and talk. They act. (*He removes his glasses and blinks owlishly around*) I hope I have made all this clear to you. Are there any questions?

MICHAEL. No, sir.

[*ELLEN and JOE enter. ELLEN takes in the disordered room, the bottles on the floor, TOMMY's and MICHAEL's condition. MICHAEL and TOMMY rise.*]

ELLEN. Tommy! What in the world have you been doing?

TOMMY. Drinking.

ELLEN. What for?

TOMMY. I was celebrating. Ellen, I have found myself. (*Glances at JOE*) I know now what I have to do.

ELLEN. Yes, I know. We've been through all that.

TOMMY. Perhaps you had better go away for a little while. (*Waves toward stairs.*)

ELLEN. I'm going. I'll be down in a minute, Joe. (*She slams upstairs.*)

JOE. Boy, wasn't that some football game? I'm running Wally Myers for President.

TOMMY (*beckoning to MICHAEL*). Come on. (*With drunken carefulness, he and MIKE begin moving furniture to the sides of the room.*)

JOE (*watches, slightly puzzled, making talk*). Yes, sir, some game, wasn't it? What did you think of Michigan going into the lead like that? If Wally hadn't snared that pass . . .

MICHAEL. We didn't listen to the game.

JOE. You didn't listen to the game?

MICHAEL. No, we turned it off. (*He flips off an imaginary dial.*)

TOMMY. The game didn't last all this time. Where have you been?

JOE. Well, we stopped in at President Cartwright's house.

TOMMY. What for?

JOE. 'Cause Ellen and I were making one last effort to get you out of this mess.

TOMMY. Ellen and you. You would know exactly what to do, wouldn't you?

JOE. You guys are pie-eyed!

TOMMY (*to MICHAEL*). Did you hear that?

MICHAEL. Yes.

JOE. What's the idea of moving all the furniture around like this?

TOMMY. I don't want you to break anything when you fall.

JOE. I'm not going to fall.

TOMMY. Yes, you are. I am going to knock you cold. (*The furniture safe, TOMMY rolls up his sleeves, and MICHAEL sits on the arm of a settee, watching.*)

JOE (*kindly*). Let's sit down and talk this over.

TOMMY (*turning to MICHAEL*). Talk, he says, to a man of action. Sit down, he says, to a tigress and her cubs!

JOE. How the hell did you guys get so cockeyed? I wish Ellen'd hurry up. (*Goes to dining-room door*) Cleota!

TOMMY. Don't call for help. I could take Cleota and you in the same ring!

JOE. Well, what's this all about?

TOMMY. You crept into this house to take Ellen away, didn't you? You thought it was the house of a professor who would talk and *talk* and TALK . . .

JOE. And by God you have! I came here to see a football game—

MICHAEL. That's a lie.

JOE. Why don't you go home?

MICHAEL. 'Cause I want to watch.

JOE. Well, there isn't going to be anything to watch.

TOMMY (*assuming a fighter's pose*). Come on, put up your fists.

JOE. Get away from me, Tommy. (*Pushes TOMMY's arm which pivots TOMMY around so he faces MICHAEL*) I'd break you in two, and I don't want to do that.

TOMMY (*speaking first to MIKE, then, realizing he is facing the wrong way, turning to JOE*). Why don't you want to do that?

JOE. 'Cause how would it look if I came here and took Ellen and knocked you down on the way out?

MICHAEL. Maybe he's right. That's a point of honor, Mr. Turner.

TOMMY. Is it?

MICHAEL. But we could fight him about something else.

TOMMY. About what?

MICHAEL. He doesn't want you to read that letter.

TOMMY. That's right. (*MICHAEL rises and slowly moves to a spot behind JOE*) Going to the president's office. Trying to make me lose my job.

JOE. Why the hell should I?

TOMMY. So you could get Ellen.

JOE. Now, listen—

TOMMY. Yes! Now I'm going to have to knock you further than I had previously decided upon. Come out in the back yard. (*He tugs at JOE, but doesn't move him. MICHAEL helpfully gives JOE a good push.*)

JOE (*turns and strides back to MICHAEL*). Don't push me!

TOMMY. Hey! (*As JOE turns, TOMMY lunges at JOE with a badly aimed hay-maker. JOE ducks and catches TOMMY to keep him from falling.*)

JOE. Now look, if you do ever get in a fight, Tommy, don't lead with your right. It leaves you wide open.

TOMMY. Oh, does it?

[ELLEN comes down the stairs with a suitcase which she drops when she sees the odd positions of the belligerents.]

ELLEN. What's happened? Tommy, what are you doing now?

TOMMY. Fighting.

[The music of the band is heard in the distance. Through the following scene it grows louder to ELLEN's exit, then dies away as the band goes around the corner, and comes up again for the end of the scene.]

ELLEN (hopefully). Fighting! What about?

MICHAEL. Penguins.

ELLEN. What!

JOE (trying to explain). Oh, it was all mixed up—about that letter thing and a lot of tigers and a cub. Tommy doesn't care what you and I are trying to do! He wants us to stay out of it!

ELLEN (disappointed bitterly). Oh, I see. That's what you were fighting about.

TOMMY. It wasn't about you. Point of honor.

ELLEN. Oh, yes, I see. You don't want me mixed up in anything. All right. You can pull the house down on top of you with your damn birds and letters and whiskey. Just let me get out of—what is all that racket!!

JOE (opens the door a crack, then closes it). Oh, they're having a victory parade, and they want me to ride in that damn carriage with Wally Myers and the band.

TOMMY. You attract bands like flies, don't you?

ELLEN (as she starts for the door). Good-bye, Tommy! I'll be out in the car, Joe! Bring my bag, please! (She slams out. The men look after her; then JOE gets ELLEN's bag, and faces TOMMY.)

JOE. You're getting me in deeper and deeper! I shoulda taken a poke at you when I had the chance!

TOMMY. Fine! Come out in the back yard! (He walks to the garden door, holds it open.)

JOE. I'm not coming out in the back yard! (MICHAEL pushes him, and TOMMY, catching him, turns him around to the lower door) Don't push me. I said, I don't like to be pushed!

TOMMY. No . . . You said, "Don't lead with your right." (He hits JOE on the nose with his left hand.)

JOE (pinching bridge of nose). Ow-w-w! Now you've started my sinus trouble! (He flings down suitcase and spreads his hand easily across TOMMY's face) By God, if you want a fight, you've got a fight! (He pushes TOMMY outside, his arms flailing the air.)

[MICHAEL plants a chair in front of the door and sits watching the fight off-stage. He applauds its progress.]

MICHAEL. Hit him! Hit him! (Quotes softly:)

"And all the summer afternoon
They hunted us and slew!
But tomorrow—by the living God!
We'll try the game again!"

Don't forget to lead with your right, Mr. Turner! . . . That's right! Right in the eye!

[CLEOTA is attracted from the dining room by the noise. WALLY and PATRICIA come in the front door, rush over to MICHAEL, who bars the door with outstretched arms.]

PATRICIA. Michael!

WALLY. What's going on here?

CLEOTA (*peering at fight off-scene*). Godamighty!

PATRICIA. Oh—Michael, stop them! Wally, stop them!

MICHAEL. No, don't stop them! Let Mr. Turner alone and he'll tear him to pieces!

[*Crash outside.*]

WALLY. Get away from that door! (*He hurls MICHAEL aside. PATRICIA runs and kneels beside MICHAEL.*)

PATRICIA. Michael! Michael!

[*ELLEN re-enters the front door, calling:*]

ELLEN. Joe, are you coming? (*She sees MICHAEL and PATRICIA on the floor, and looks around the room for TOMMY and JOE. MICHAEL continues to quote poetry dramatically.*)

MICHAEL (*with rapid fervor*).

"And many-a-broken heart is here . . ."

ELLEN. What is it?

MICHAEL.

"And many-a-broken head,
But tomorrow—by the living God!—
We'll try the game again!"

(*He tries to rise; PATRICIA drops him in disgust.*)

PATRICIA. Oh, Michael!

[*JOE and WALLY carry in the unconscious TOMMY, and deposit him on the sofa.*]

ELLEN (*screams*). Tommy!!

[*The phone rings insistently.*]

CLEOTA (*shouts imperturbably into phone*). Professah Turner's res-i-dence!

THE CURTAIN FALLS SWIFTLY

ACT THREE

SCENE: *The Turner living room. Same as Acts One and Two.*
About noon, Monday.

The room is neat and orderly, but the flowers and other signs of festivity have been removed.

The stage is empty, but the telephone bell is ringing. A moment later, the doorbell also begins to sound insistently. CLEOTA enters from the dining room, wiping her hands on her apron, scuttles for an instant between the bells, picks up phone.

CLEOTA (*into phone*). Stop ringin' dis thing both at once . . . Who? . . . Ah cain' heah you foh de ringin'. Hol' on . . . (*Putting down the receiver, she hurries to the front door and opens it cautiously, bracing herself to prevent a forced entrance. She speaks through the crack of the door to the man standing there*) Ah tol' you stop ringin' eve'ything. Ah'm heah, ain' I?

REPORTER. I'd like to see Mr. Turner.

CLEOTA. Is you a newspapah?

REPORTER. Yeh, I'm from the *Daily Journal*.

CLEOTA. He cain' see nobody—he's sick.

REPORTER. I know—but will he be up today? Is he going to his class?

CLEOTA. He ain' goin' nowheah. His haid huhts him. He's sick. Go 'way. (*She forces the door shut, returns to the telephone*) Professah Turner's residence. . . . *Daily* what? . . . You jus' *was* heah. . . . No, Professah Turner ain' talkin' to nobody. He's sick in bed with his haid. . . . No, he ain' goin' an' you ain' comin'. He ain' not talkin' 'cause he doan wanta talk. He jus' ain' talkin' 'cause he cain' talk. Goo'bye. (*The bolted door is rattled from outside, then the doorbell begins to ring insistently. CLEOTA looks at the door angrily and starts for it. She looks back at the phone and mutters*) What's goin' on heah? . . . I told you to go 'way. (*She opens the door and PATRICIA enters.*)

PATRICIA. What's the matter?

CLEOTA (*giggling in embarrassment*). Oh, it's you. I thought it was that newspapah again. He jus' went.

PATRICIA. He didn't go—he's outside picketing. Where's my sister, Cleota?

CLEOTA. Upstaihs . . . Miss Patricia, Ah wish Ah knew bettah what's goin' on heah.

PATRICIA. Never mind.

CLEOTA. Mr. Michael jus' left.

PATRICIA. Oh. Well, if Mr. Michael Barnes comes here again, *don't let him in!*

CLEOTA. No, ma'am. (*CLEOTA goes into the dining room just as ELLEN, looking very depressed, comes from upstairs.*)

PATRICIA. Hello, Ellen. How's Tommy? Is he still asleep?

ELLEN. Yes, but he tosses around and mutters. The doctor says he can get up this afternoon.

PATRICIA. No concussion, then?

ELLEN. Yes, a little.

PATRICIA (*seating herself on settee*). I guess when anybody's as crazy as Tommy or Michael, a little concussion doesn't make any difference.

ELLEN. Did you get the butter?

PATRICIA. Oh, Lord, no. I'll go back.

ELLEN. Never mind. I need a little air. (*PATRICIA tackles the problem in the*

air with the light attitude of youth, becoming serious as she realizes more vigorous methods are needed.)

PATRICIA. How's your head?

ELLEN. Oh, all right.

PATRICIA. Is it? Say, what is this second springtime you're all going through, anyway?

ELLEN. Tommy won't let me in on what he's really thinking about. He thinks I'm not smart enough to understand it—that's what it comes down to.

PATRICIA. Oh, a mental problem. I haven't been exactly listening at keyholes, but isn't there a Joe Something-or-other mixed up in this?

ELLEN. Oh, there's more to it than a fight about Joe.

PATRICIA. Pretty good one round here Saturday about Joe. (*Then, directly*) You know Tommy was fighting for you in his mid-Victorian way, don't you?

ELLEN. Oh, but he was drunk. When he's sober he despises me. He thinks I'm a dim-wit.

PATRICIA. Oh, he wouldn't want you any other way than you are.

ELLEN. Thanks.

PATRICIA. I mean you're smart enough for Tommy, and you know it, and he knows it.

ELLEN (*unhappily*). I'm all mixed up. I want to go away some place where I can think.

PATRICIA. Look: this is a new century. You're not Diana-of-the-Crossways or somebody.

ELLEN. Well, what do you want me to do—stay here when he doesn't want me?

PATRICIA (*vigorously*). No, but if you're going away, go away with Joe. Tommy's certainly been throwing you at him. Why don't you take him up on it? See what happens.

ELLEN. Is this advice to the lovelorn? Do you think he would come running after me?

PATRICIA. Well, you've got to quit moping around and do something. I thought we Stanley women were supposed to have some resources. (*Rises and faces ELLEN*) Look, your great-grandmother chased her man all the way to Nebraska in a covered wagon.

ELLEN. Well, I'm not going to chase anybody anywhere! I'm going to talk this over with Tommy, fairly and squarely, face to face. (*Starts to front door.*)

PATRICIA. "Fairly and squarely!" How did your generation ever get through the 1920's?

ELLEN (*sadly*). We didn't. (*She goes out.*)

[PATRICIA *sighs in despair*. TOMMY comes slowly downstairs. He wears a terry-cloth bathrobe, and has a wet turkish towel twisted about his head.]

TOMMY. Hello, Pat.

PATRICIA. Tommy—you shouldn't be up!

TOMMY. I'm all right. What day is this?

PATRICIA. Monday.

TOMMY. Cleota! Cleota! (*To PATRICIA*) Can I take this thing off?

PATRICIA. You're not supposed to. You ought to lie down. (TOMMY *sinks in chair.*)

TOMMY. I'll just lean back. (*Winces as he tries it*) No—I guess I won't.

[CLEOTA *appears in dining-room door.*]

CLEOTA. Mistah Turner—is you up?

TOMMY. Yes, I'm up. Cleota, don't let anyone in this house except Mr. Michael Barnes.

[PATRICIA *shakes her head "No" to CLEOTA.*]

CLEOTA (*nodding to both*). Yessuh—Ah do de best Ah can. (*Backs out of room.*)

TOMMY. Where's Ellen?

PATRICIA. She went out to—to get the transfer man—for her trunk.

TOMMY. She's going away?

PATRICIA. Oh, no. She just likes to call on transfer men. Didn't you know that?

TOMMY. I can't stand irony so early in the day, Patricia.

PATRICIA. You're all right now, you see. She wouldn't go before. I don't know why.

TOMMY. You ought to know why. Your sister wouldn't walk out on anybody when he's down—even when he's down with delirium tremens.

PATRICIA. You didn't have D.T.'s. You had concussion.

TOMMY. Seemed more like D.T.'s.

PATRICIA. You don't know very much about my little sister, do you?

TOMMY. I know a lot more than I did last Friday. I think I will lie down. (*Goes to sofa.*)

PATRICIA. Why do you have to make everything as hard as you can? (TOMMY *groans a little with pain*) Do you want another cold towel?

TOMMY. No, thanks.

[*Phone rings.*]

PATRICIA (*answering phone*). Yes? . . . Who? No, Michael Barnes isn't here.

TOMMY (*lying down carefully*). He was here and he's coming back.

PATRICIA. This is Patricia Stanley. . . . Yes . . . Yes . . . I'll be very glad to tell him to call you—if I see him. Good-bye. (*Slams receiver down*) That was Hot Garters Gardner!

TOMMY. Oh. Why did she call here?

PATRICIA. She said they told her Michael was on his way here, but obviously she just called for my benefit . . . So that's where he went Saturday night! You had that Hot—that Miss Gardner in some of your classes; do you remember her?

TOMMY (*reflectively*). I don't know. What does she look like?

PATRICIA. Well, she—doesn't wear any . . . (*Gestures a brassière.*)

TOMMY. I only had her in Wordsworth.

PATRICIA. Calling up here! (*There is a knock at the door; PATRICIA smiles grimly. She goes to the door and opens it. MICHAEL steps in; he is taken aback at seeing PATRICIA*) Good morning, Michael. Come in.

TOMMY (*in warning, sepulchral tones*). Yes, come in, Michael. (*PATRICIA'S back is turned so TOMMY pantomimes "telephone" for MICHAEL'S benefit. MICHAEL peers at him nervously.*)

MICHAEL. I got the car for you. . . . Feel better now that you're up? (*Doesn't get the pantomime.*)

TOMMY. Yes, much better. How do you feel?

MICHAEL. I feel all right.

TOMMY. That's good. (*Mimics PATRICIA'S brassière gesture.*)

PATRICIA (*turning*). If you'll excuse me . . .

MICHAEL. Oh, Pat, wait! I—could I talk to you for a minute? Couldn't we go outside there and . . .

PATRICIA. No, we couldn't go outside there! Is it anything you're ashamed to say in front of Tommy?

MICHAEL (*stiffening*). No. No, I'm not. Only— Well, I don't want to get off on the wrong foot again. I'm sorry I got so mad Saturday. I said things and did things that . . .

PATRICIA. You certainly did!

MICHAEL. Well, I'm sorry, and . . . Oh, Pat, you ought to be able to see this my way. We just lost our tempers and—well—Mr. Turner and I are in a jam. I think you ought to—well—make an effort to understand what we're trying to do and stand by us—that is, if you care anything about me at all.

PATRICIA (*so sweetly*). Oh, I certainly do. I've been standing by—taking messages for you—phone calls. I'm so glad we had this nice talk. (*Shakes his hand*) And before you go, be sure to call Maple 4307! (*She hurls the last at him furiously, then sweeps out the front door.*)

MICHAEL (*looking after her*). Maple 430 . . . (*Horried, as he realizes who the number belongs to*) Did The Garters call here?

TOMMY. That's what I was trying to tell you. Patricia answered the phone. The—elastics—snapped right in her face.

MICHAEL. And I didn't even *do* anything. (*Sits beside TOMMY on sofa*) I hope.

TOMMY. Michael, you're making me nervous.

[*A pause.*]

MICHAEL. Will you be able to go to the faculty meeting tonight?

TOMMY. I'll be there.

MICHAEL. They'll be out to get you. . . . I know this is all my fault, Mr. Turner.

TOMMY. Yes, you're certainly the man that lighted the match.

MICHAEL. I just came from the president's office; he flayed me alive.

TOMMY. Are you kicked out?

MICHAEL. Suspended.

TOMMY. Michael, tell me . . . are you really a Communist?

MICHAEL. Me? No. I only know one guy who is. I'm—well, I guess I'm an unconfused liberal. . . . I think I'll go to Stringfellow Barr's School in Annapolis and read the classics.

TOMMY. I wonder where I'll go?

[ELLEN enters front door with parcel.]

MICHAEL (rises). Hello, Mrs. Turner.

ELLEN. Good morning. (Sees TOMMY) Good morning, Tommy. . . . (Goes to dining-room door and calls) Cleota . . .

TOMMY. Good morning.

[CLEOTA enters.]

ELLEN. Here's the butter, Cleota. Will you make Mr. Turner a cup of tea? (Turns back to him) Would you like a hard-boiled egg?

TOMMY. No, thanks. Nothing hard. My teeth hurt.

[CLEOTA retires.]

ELLEN. Are you waiting for Patricia, Michael?

MICHAEL. I saw her. I'm leaving town, Mrs. Turner.

ELLEN. I'm awfully sorry, Michael.

WALLY (off-stage). Pat! Oh, Pat!

ELLEN. Come in, Wally. (WALLY comes in from the garden) Patricia's gone out somewhere.

WALLY. Oh, I see. (To MICHAEL) You waiting for her?

MICHAEL. That's none of your business. Why? (He strides over to WALLY.)

WALLY (lowers his voice). I know what you did Saturday night, that's why. Well, thanks, Mrs. Turner. I just cut across the back way. I'll walk on down to the house. (Starts out.)

MICHAEL (stops him). I think I'll walk along down to the house. I want to talk to you.

WALLY. You don't have to.

MICHAEL. If I didn't have to, I wouldn't do it. I'm no masochist. (Starts out. WALLY stares after him blankly, then follows.)

WALLY. You don't have to use words like that in front of ladies!

MICHAEL. I'll be back in time to drive you to class, Mr. Turner.

[Both boys go out.]

TOMMY. Thanks.

[CLEOTA enters, and ELLEN takes the tray from her.]

ELLEN. Here's your tea.

[CLEOTA goes out.]

TOMMY. Thanks.

ELLEN (with some constraint). How do you feel?

TOMMY. Very strange.

ELLEN. Is everything clear to you now?

TOMMY. Clear in the center. It's kind of fuzzy around the edges.

[ELLEN has made up her mind what she wants to say; she seats herself and begins.]

ELLEN. I hope it's clear enough to give me a chance to say something, without your going off on one of your literary tangents.

TOMMY. I don't do that.

ELLEN. I know you think I'm not very bright or something (TOMMY tries to

demur, but she continues) but you must realize that you got me all mixed up Friday, and that you were even less helpful Saturday.

TOMMY. That wasn't me Saturday. That was a drunken sea-lion.

ELLEN. I rather liked you as a sea-lion.

TOMMY. Yes, I must have been very funny. Did you ever read Hodgson's poem, "The Bull"?

ELLEN. Oh, Tommy!

TOMMY. It's the story of the defeated male. There is no defeat that can be quite so complete.

ELLEN. You wouldn't admit that this defeat was on account of— No, it has to be something out of a book.

TOMMY. "When the bull's head is in the dust, life goes on and leaves him there"; it's a psychological fact. The poets understand these things.

ELLEN. And all the cows react the same way? As if they were reading instructions from a blackboard? Oh, Tommy, listen to me . . .

[*The doorbell rings.*]

TOMMY. The point is, I don't want any pity.

CLEOTA (*hurrying from dining room*). It's dat prize-fightah! I seen him from de windah!

[*ELLEN admits JOE, who comes in without his old bounce; he is worried and restless.*]

ELLEN. Hello, Joe.

JOE. Hello. Hello. (*Awkwardly, to TOMMY.*)

TOMMY. Hello.

JOE. I'm sorry, Tommy. I didn't hit you hard. You slipped and hit your head on a bench.

TOMMY. Yeh, I know. What's the matter with your hands?

JOE. You kinda bit me. . . . Ed's out in the car. We just chased a reporter away hanging around out there.

ELLEN. Well, don't let any reporters in, Cleota.

TOMMY. And don't let Keller in.

[*CLEOTA nods and exits to kitchen.*]

JOE (*indicating wet towel*). Do you have to keep that thing on?

TOMMY. No, I just do it because I like it. (*Throws down towel.*)

JOE. Could I have a little slug of something? I . . .

ELLEN. Certainly. Scotch?

JOE. Yeh, fine. (*ELLEN goes to dining room. JOE paces*) I got the galloping jumps. I can use a little drink. Haven't slept for two nights.

TOMMY. Worrying about something?

JOE. Yeh, worrying about something. And my cold's worse.

TOMMY. Want some Kleenex?

JOE (*irritated*). No, I don't want some Kleenex! Damn reporters been bothering me, too.

TOMMY. What do they want with you?

JOE. Oh, they wanted me to pick an All-American team.

TOMMY (*incredulously—almost*). Did you?

JOE. Yeh. Kinda took my mind off things.

TOMMY (*sarcastically*). Who'd you pick for right guard?

JOE. Shulig—Kansas State Teachers'. (*Faces TOMMY*) Look, Tommy, where the hell do we all stand now? (*TOMMY picks up towel, presses it to his head again*) Does that kinda throb?

TOMMY. No.

JOE. Well, I wanta know where we all stand.

TOMMY. Oh, let it alone, Joe. It'll work out. You and I can handle this. I don't want Ellen worried about details now. She's got enough trouble with me—sitting around the house looking like a hot-oil shampoo. . . .

[*ELLEN enters with bowl of ice. She fixes a drink.*]

ELLEN. There's been more drinking in this house in the last two days than we've done in ten years.

[*JOE sits on settee at far side of room.*]

TOMMY (*after a pause*). Ellen, Joe picked Shulig of Kansas State Teachers' for right guard, on his All-American. Isn't that nice?

[*ELLEN looks annoyed*]

JOE (*reminiscently*). It was kinda hard choosing between him and Feldkamp of Western Reserve. Both big and fast.

ELLEN (*crossing with drink*). Here you are, dear. (*She is coolly oblivious of TOMMY's hand which he puts out for the drink; goes on to JOE, who doesn't realize she means him*) Dear. (*He looks up at her with a start, glances at TOMMY, then takes the drink.*)

TOMMY (*sulkily*). I don't want any.

JOE. Say, have you got a Pennsylvania timetable around?

ELLEN. Where are you going, Joe?

JOE. Well, I've got to be in Washington tomorrow.

ELLEN. That's going to rush me.

JOE. What do you mean?

ELLEN. Well, Joe, I thought you and I might start out by going up to that little inn at Granville tonight. Just for a few days. (*She sits close to JOE on settee.*)

TOMMY (*rises*). What did you say?

ELLEN (*to JOE*). I think it's the nicest place around here. Don't you?

JOE (*flopping on the hook*). I—I—eh— Could I have a little more Scotch? (*He hurries across the room, pours himself another drink.*)

ELLEN (*gaily*). I don't want you to get drunk, Joe.

JOE. I'll be all right—I'll be all right. What time is it?

TOMMY. Never mind what time it is. (*To ELLEN*) Would you mind explaining this a little better?

ELLEN. I'll try to make it as clear as I can for both of you. I simply have to make a fresh start now, Tommy. You understand women; you must see that. I can't stay here now. You've made your plans, and now I have to make mine.

TOMMY. Yes—but not like this—not running off to Granville!

ELLEN. All right, if you're afraid of a scandal, we'll go farther away. Put Granville out of your mind, then. We'll go directly to Pittsburgh.

JOE. Huh?

ELLEN. It's a very big town. Nobody need know anything about it.

JOE. About what?

ELLEN. About us. About our living together.

[*Both men stop cold.*]

TOMMY. Ellen!

JOE (*desperately*). But you see—I don't live in Pittsburgh. (*He makes a large circular gesture with both hands*) I live in Sewickly. (*The gesture is small and loving now*) And my boss lives there, too. And my mother. My mother's not very well. My mother . . .

TOMMY. Oh, you and your mother!

JOE. Besides it's a Presbyterian town.

ELLEN. You're not being very gallant, Joe.

TOMMY. No. Are you trying to get out of this?

JOE. No, but I come from a long line of married people! And besides, I'm not going to Pittsburgh directly. I've got to go to Washington, and that's one place I couldn't take you, Ellen!

TOMMY. You'll take her any place she wants to go, but she's not going any place!

ELLEN. Oh, yes, I am!

[*There is a loud knock, and ED KELLER enters.*]

ED. I can't sit out in that car all day, you know.

JOE. Oh, I'm sorry, Ed, but—jees, I forgot all about you. (*Turns to TOMMY*) I persuaded Ed to come over and talk to you before this thing gets too bad. (*He leads ED over to TOMMY.*)

TOMMY. It couldn't get any worse!

JOE. I mean about the trustees.

TOMMY. Let the trustees take care of themselves. We have troubles of our own.

ED. You'll find out this is your trouble. Is he able to talk?

JOE. God, yes!

ED (*to TOMMY*). Well, then, listen. We just had a trustees' meeting in the president's office. Michael Barnes is out, and you're on your way out. You'll be asked to resign tonight.

ELLEN (*rises*). Oh, Tommy!

JOE. Ed's trying to help him while there's still time. After tonight, it will be too late.

TOMMY. What do you care what happens tonight? You'll be in Granville or somewhere.

ED. What're you going to be doing in Granville?

TOMMY. Please don't ask personal questions!

ELLEN. Do you mind if I stay a little while, Tommy?

TOMMY (*angrily*). Why shouldn't you stay? It's your house.

ED. Sit down, Ellen. (*She sits. To TOMMY*) There's just one thing you can do: come out with a statement to the papers, quick. Say you were sick. Say you didn't know anything about Barnes' editorial. You think it's an outrage.

You're not going to read this Vanzetti thing, and you think Barnes is getting what he deserves. That's the only thing that'll save your neck.

ELLEN. Tommy wouldn't say that about Michael, Ed, and you shouldn't ask him to.

TOMMY. Thank you!

ED. All right, then. That's all I had to say. Good-bye. This is on your own head.

ELLEN. Ed. Just a minute, please. (*Faces TOMMY*) I know that reading this letter must mean something to you, Tommy. Something none of us can quite understand. I wish I could. It might help me to understand a lot of other things, when I can get away where I can think.

TOMMY. Such as what?

ELLEN. Such as what is important to you. What you've been fighting for. Whether it's something you really believe in and love, or just your own selfish pride. I think you got into this just because you were mad at me. And that's ridiculous, because now you don't care what I do or say about it. You're out of that.

ED (*to JOE*). I don't see what she's talking about. (*JOE motions him to be quiet.*)

TOMMY. All right, I'll try to explain what it means to me. Perhaps, originally, pride had something to do with this. And jealousy.

ELLEN. And stubbornness. . . .

TOMMY. And—please. I am trying to say that—now—I am not fighting about you and me at all. This is bigger than you and me or any of us.

ELLEN. Is it?

ED (*ironically*). It must be a masterpiece. That letter must be quite a nice piece of propaganda.

TOMMY. Why don't you read it and find out?

ED. I don't read things like that.

TOMMY. My God, you don't even know what you're objecting to!

JOE. Well, Tommy, why don't you read the letter to us, and let us see what it is?

TOMMY. I'll be glad to read it to you, but I'll read it to my class, too. (*He goes to bookcase and hunts for the book; not finding it, he remembers it is upstairs and goes up.*)

ED. You don't have to read it to me. I know what kind of stuff it is.
[*The front door bursts open, and PATRICIA backs in, followed by WALLY, leaving the door open.*]

PATRICIA. But I can't go with you now! I told you I've got to wait here and see what Tommy's going to do.

WALLY. But you're not going to the class! You said you're not going!

PATRICIA. I'm not! I just want to know!

WALLY. I'll bet you *are* going! You're waiting here for Michael to go with you!

PATRICIA. Oh, go away! (*Turning, she sees the others, who are listening*) Oh—I'm sorry. (*She rushes across to the door leading to the garden.*)

ED. What's this now?

JOE (*grinning*). Hey, Pat, you better think twice before you scrap with Wally here. He's coming in with me at Pittsburgh next year.

WALLY. A lot she cares about Pittsburgh! I run sixty-two yards through Michigan, and all she wants is to listen to Mike Barnes talk about free love. (*He stalks over to PATRICIA.*)

ED. She does?

ELLEN (*trying to stop WALLY*). Uh—Wally, how's Stalenkiwicz?

WALLY (*brushing past her*). He's much better. (*To PATRICIA*) If you knew what I know about that guy Barnes . . .

PATRICIA. I know what you're hinting at! And what if he did? It only shows what an intense person Michael is! I know that no matter what he did, he was thinking of me!

WALLY. That's disgusting!

PATRICIA. And aren't you a little bit disgusting to mention it? I thought *men* had some loyalty! (*She goes out.*)

WALLY (*following her out*). Now, listen here . . . I want to tell you about that guy. Do you know what he did? . . .

ED (*sitting on sofa*). What kind of a house is this?

[*As TOMMY comes downstairs with an open book in his hand, DAMON, carrying his ever-present umbrella, walks quietly in the open front door and looks around.*]

TOMMY. All right, here it is. Now sit down—or stand up—but listen! Oh, hello, Dr. Damon. You're just in time.

DAMON. In time for what? (*Sees ED, moves toward him*) Oh, has the Inquisition moved its headquarters?

TOMMY. I'm just going to read the Inquisition a letter from one of its victims.

ED. That's about enough of that.

DAMON. Gentlemen, gentlemen. This may not be wise, Thomas.

TOMMY. It may not be wise, but it's necessary. I think you'll have to take a stand, too, Dr. Damon.

DAMON. I hope not. (*Sits on settee; JOE seats himself on the fireplace bench; ELLEN sits at opposite side of room.*)

TOMMY. So did I hope not. I didn't start out to lead a crusade. I simply mentioned one day that I meant to read to my class three letters by men whose profession was not literature, but who had something sincere to say. Once I had declared that very harmless intention, the world began to shake, great institutions trembled, and football players descended upon me and my wife! I realized then that I was doing something important.

ED (*sarcastically*). You make it sound mighty innocent. Reading Lincoln and General Sherman—and Vanzetti. What was the reason you gave for picking out Vanzetti?

TOMMY (*to ED*). Originally I chose him to show that what we call broken English can sometimes be very moving and eloquent, but now—

ED. We wouldn't object if this was just a case of broken English—it's more than that.

TOMMY. Yes, you've made it more than that.

ED. Vanzetti was an anarchist! He was executed for murder.

TOMMY. He was accused of murder, but thousands of people believe he was executed simply because of the ideas he believed in.

ED. That's a dangerous thing to bring up.

TOMMY (*getting really mad*). No, it's a dangerous thing to keep down. I'm fighting for a teacher's rights, but if you want to make it political, all right! You can't suppress ideas because you don't like them—not in this country—not yet. This is a university! (*To DAMON*) It's our business to bring what light we can into this muddled world—to try to follow truth!

DAMON. You are quite right, Thomas, but I wish you would make an effort not to—uh—uh—intone.

TOMMY. I'm not intoning—I'm yelling! And for God's sake, sir, put away that umbrella! (*DAMON covers his umbrella with his hat*) Don't you see: this isn't about Vanzetti; this is about us! If I can't read this letter today, tomorrow none of us will be able to teach anything except what Mr. Keller here and the legislature permit us to teach. Can't you see what that leads to—what it has led to in other places? We're holding the last fortress of free thought, and if we surrender to prejudice and dictation, we're cowards! (*He strides across the room.*)

ELLEN. Tommy, no matter how deeply you feel about this, what can you *do*? What can any one man do? Except to lose everything . . .

TOMMY. Ellen, I have very little more to lose. And I can't tell you what I hope to gain. I can't answer that. I only know that I have to do it.

[*PATRICIA appears in the doorway, stops and listens.*]

DAMON. May we hear the letter—in a slightly calmer mood, perhaps?

TOMMY. Yes, sir . . . This may disappoint you a little, Mr. Keller. It isn't inflammatory, so it may make you feel a little silly. At least, I hope so. . . . (*He holds up the book, pauses. ED and JOE get set in their chairs*) Vanzetti wrote this in April, 1927, after he was sentenced to die. It has been printed in many newspapers. It appears in this book. You could destroy every printed copy of it, but it would not die out of the language, because a great many people know it by heart. (*He reads, hardly referring to the book, watching them*) "If it had not been for these thing, I might have live out my life talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have die, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. Never in our full life could we hope to do so much work for tolerance, for Justice, for man's understanding of man, as now we do by accident. Our words—our lives—our pain—nothing! The taking of our lives—the lives of a good shoe-maker and a poor fish-peddler—all! That last moment belongs to us—that agony is our triumph!" . . . Well, that's it! (*He closes the book and drops it on the table. There is silence for a moment; KELLER is puzzled; ELLEN, who has been moved by the letter, looks up in surprise, meets TOMMY's eyes, then drops hers.*)

JOE (*uncomfortably*). Well, that isn't so bad! That isn't a bad letter.

ED. Is that all of it?

TOMMY. Yes, that's all!

JOE (*rises*). Maybe Tommy's right. I don't see that it would do so much harm.

ED (*slowly*). Yes, it will. If he reads this letter to his class he'll get a lot of those kids worried about that man. Make socialists out of 'em.

JOE. It's got me worried already.

ED (*rises, facing TOMMY*). No—I won't have it. You fellows are trying to defy the authority of the trustees. You say you're going to take a stand. Well, we've *taken* a stand. I wouldn't care if that letter were by Alexander Hamilton.

TOMMY (*measuring him*). Neither would I! The principle is exactly the same.

JOE (*speaking hopefully*). Well, then, read something else. Why can't you read Hoover?

ED. Yeah.

JOE. He writes a lot of stuff—a lot of good stuff in his book.

TOMMY (*his artistic ire is aroused*). Hoover can't *write* as well as Vanzetti.

ED (*winces*). That's a terrible thing to say. You'll get in trouble saying things like that.

TOMMY. Very likely! (*He strides to garden door.*)

JOE. Ed, look—can't we compromise somehow? Seems a shame that a little thing like this should . . .

ELLEN (*rises*). It isn't little! Joe, you have some influence around here.

TOMMY. I can fight my own battles, Ellen.

ELLEN. Can't I say anything any more—even on your side?

ED. Turner, I've heard the letter and . . .

TOMMY (*answering ELLEN*). Not out of a sense of self-sacrifice or something!

ED. What?

ELLEN. Oh, yes, you always know . . .

ED (*to JOE*). Do we always have to have women butting into this?

JOE. Ellen isn't women. She's Tommy's wife.

ELLEN (*furiously*). No, I'm not!

ED. No. Turner, it comes to this. . . . (*Turns to ELLEN*) You're not what? Do you mean to stand there and tell me you two are not—

TOMMY (*raging*). Will you please not ask personal questions?

ED (*to TOMMY*). No. *We can't have that in this school!*

ELLEN (*with a glance at JOE*). It's Joe and I who are going to live together!

ED. Yeh, will you let me— (*To ELLEN*) You and Joe are going to what? (*Turns on JOE*) What the hell is going on here anyway?

JOE. Now don't look at me!

ED. You can't live with Ellen!

JOE. I didn't say . . .

ELLEN (*twisting the knife in both men's backs*). We might as well tell him now. I'm going to Pittsburgh with Joe. (*Plants herself on settee.*)

ED (*turning back to ELLEN*). Why, you can't do that! The newspapers would make Midwestern University look like some kind of honky-tonk or something! Why, this is worse than that goddamn letter!

TOMMY. Aren't you getting off the subject?

ED. No! What kind of a woman are you?

TOMMY (*advancing on ED*). Why don't you come out in the back yard?

JOE. Better be careful, Ed!

ELLEN. No more fights, please!

DAMON (*rises*). I think I shall get a breath of fresh air. (*Goes to front door and opens it.*)

ELLEN. Well, I can't stay *here* now!

JOE. Look, Ed, you don't understand. You get things all mixed up.

ED. Well, I've got this much straight—if we can keep sex out of this for a minute! I came here to say to you that if you read this letter today you're out of this university tomorrow! You take this stand and you stand alone!

DAMON (*turning, walks deliberately over to ED*). Mr. Keller, for forty-two years I have followed a policy of appeasement. I might say I have been kicked around in this institution by one Edward K. Keller after another. . . .

ED. There is only one Edward K. Keller.

DAMON. There has always been at least one. But there is an increasing element in the faculty which resents your attitude toward any teacher who raises his voice or so much as clears his throat. I warn you that if you persist in persecuting Thomas Turner, you will have a fight on your hands, my friend.

ED. Do you think that Bryson and Kressinger and I are afraid of a few dissatisfied book-worms who work for twenty-five hundred dollars a year?

DAMON (*with strong indignation*). These men are not malcontents! Some of them are distinguished scholars who have made this university what it is!

ED (*aghast*). They've made it what it is! What about me? Who's getting this new stadium? Who brought Coach Sprague here from Southern Methodist?

JOE. He means that this thing is bigger than stadiums and coaches, Ed.

ED. Nothing's bigger than the new stadium.

JOE. We've all had a bad week-end around here, Ed, and you're not helping any.

ED. Do you think I've had a good week-end!

[MICHAEL and NUTSY come in the front door.]

MICHAEL. Come in, Nutsy.

ED. Now what!?

MICHAEL. We're circulating petitions for Mr. Turner. Show 'em, Nutsy.

NUTSY (*whipping out some sheets full of signatures*). This one's just from 14th Avenue and the Athletic House. We've got 357 names.

DAMON. We want no student insurrections!

JOE. Let me see that thing. (*Takes petition from NUTSY, scans it hurriedly.*)

ED. You're wasting your time with that handful of names. Turner will be out tomorrow and Barnes is on his way home now.

MICHAEL. I'm not on my way home yet, sir.

ED. OHHH! So you're Barnes!!! So you're the little puppy that called me a Fascist!

[PATRICIA comes between ED and MICHAEL.]

PATRICIA (*to ED*). Well, the way you're treating everybody, I think you are a Fascist!

ELLEN. Patricia!

TOMMY. Let her alone!

ELLEN. Oh, she can stand up for Michael, but I can't stand up for you! Is that it?

TOMMY. It's not the same.

ED. Do I have to stand here and be insulted by every sixteen-year-old child that comes into this room?

PATRICIA. I'm not sixteen, I'm nineteen!

MICHAEL. She'll soon be twenty!

ED. Why don't *you* get packing?

MICHAEL. You don't need to worry about me. I'll be far away from here by tomorrow. Come on, Nutsy! (*NUTSY starts out, MICHAEL following.*)

PATRICIA. If you throw him out, I'm going with him! Wait, Michael! (*Starts after him.*)

ED. Are you married to that little radical?

PATRICIA. You don't have to be married to somebody to go away with him—*do you, Ellen?* (*She and MICHAEL go out.*)

DAMON (*who can't cope with any more*). I think I shall go home, have my Ovaltine and lie down. (*He goes out the front door.*)

ED. He'll need his Ovaltine.

JOE (*suddenly, awesomely*). Say, Ed, look. This thing has been signed by Stalenkiwicz and Wierasocka.

ED. What! I don't believe it! (*Snatches petition, scans it, in all its terrible significance.*)

JOE. Ed, you ought to have some respect for men like Dean Damon and Stalenkiwicz and Wierasocka.

ED (*stricken*). They can't do this to me! Two of the biggest men in the university signing the red petition! You, the greatest half-back we ever had, running away with a woman! Why—*they'll never ask us to the Rose Bowl now!*

TOMMY. What is the Rose Bowl?

[ED almost screams.]

ED. I'm getting out of this house! Coming, Joe?

JOE. No.

ED. By God, you can't depend on anybody! I've a damn good notion to resign from the board of trustees. (*Stiffening*) But I'll kick you out if it's the last thing I do.

TOMMY (*grimly*). Just to make things even—I'll kick you out. Here's your hat. (*Gives him JOE's derby.*)

ED. Very well! (*Puts on hat and leaves angrily.*)

JOE. Hey, that's *my* hat!

TOMMY. Well, get another one! (*He closes door.*) Well, that's that. (*They look at each other. Here they are again; the triangle.*)

JOE. Yeh, that's that. (*Pause. He eyes the others doubtfully*) Well, I s'pose Ed will never speak to me again.

TOMMY. I have to go to class. I'll be late. (*Starts for stairs.*)

ELLEN (*appealingly, to TOMMY*). Tommy, I . . .

TOMMY. I know. I know.

ELLEN. You know what?

TOMMY. I know what you're going to say—but I don't want substitutes. I don't want *loyalty*.

[ELLEN *turns away*.]

JOE. What's the matter with that?

TOMMY. I just don't want Ellen standing by like a Red Cross nurse because she knows I'm in trouble!

JOE. I don't know whether you need a nurse or a psychoanalyst!

ELLEN. I think he's analyzed it very well himself. It isn't because you think I don't care, it's because you don't.

TOMMY (*almost bursting*). I thought we could settle this *quietly and calmly*.

ELLEN. Quietly and calmly! Oh, God! (*She picks up large ash tray from a table and smashes it on the floor.*)

TOMMY. Now, don't do that! I can throw things, too! (*He picks up his tea-cup.*)

ELLEN. No, you can't—you haven't got enough blood in you!

[TOMMY *glares at her, puts cup down coldly, suddenly snatches it up, and hurls it into the fireplace, reaches for the saucer.*]

JOE (*leaps for TOMMY, grabs the saucer from him*). Now wait—let me handle this. *I don't throw things*. . . . I just want to say that I came to this city to see a football game. . . .

ELLEN (*right into JOE's face*). Oh, no, you didn't! You came for me. You haven't been here for a ball game in ten years. You wait till Brenda and you are separated, then you come for me!

JOE. Oh, hell! (*Throws the saucer in fireplace, then wilts as he realizes this household has affected him, too.*)

TOMMY (*desperately insisting upon his doom*). That's very smart, Ellen. That's very penetrating. That's all I wanted to know. (*To JOE*) Subconsciously, you came here for Ellen, so don't try to deny it.

JOE. I don't do things subconsciously! You're full of childish explanations of every goddamn thing that comes up!

TOMMY. And you're full of psychological evasions!

ELLEN (*screaming. It's a mad-house now*). Oh, shut up! I am not going to listen to any more of this! (*She runs upstairs. TOMMY sits limply on sofa and covers his face with his hands. There is a long pause.*)

JOE (*slowly, and with determination*). Well, I'll tell you one thing! I'm not going upstairs this time! If you'd explained what you were standing for on Saturday, things would have cleared up around here and I'd be in Washington now, talking to Ickes.

TOMMY (*in a low grim tone*). Are you still in love with Norma?

JOE. Norma who?

TOMMY. Your wife.

JOE. My wife's name is Brenda. And you're not going to talk her over with me. I can't be alone with you two minutes and have any private life left!

ELLEN (*from upstairs*). Tommy! *What did you do with my nail file??!*

JOE. Oh, God—she sounds worse than last Saturday!

TOMMY. I haven't got it. (*He absently goes through a pocket, finds it, brings it out*) Oh. Yeh, I've got it.

JOE. I've gone through more hell here in three days than I've had with Phyllis in three years.

TOMMY (*grimly rising*). Phyllis? Who is Phyllis? Are you living with some other woman in Pittsburgh? You can't do this.

JOE (*springing to his feet*). I'm not living with anybody! Phyllis is my secretary, and there's nothing between us!

TOMMY. *Then why did you say you've been going through hell for three years?*

JOE (*yelling*). 'Cause you get me all balled up!

[*ELLEN stomps downstairs with a suitcase and sets it down.*]

TOMMY. Here . . . here's your nail file. (*Hands it to her*) You didn't pack anything!

ELLEN. I've been packed for three days!

TOMMY (*his voice threatens to break, but he holds out*). Well, you can't go with just one suitcase. . . . There isn't much here, but—there're the books. They're yours. Most of them I gave to you. (*He turns away.*)

ELLEN. Can I have *The Shropshire Lad*? Isn't that the one that has: "And now the fancy passes by . . ."

TOMMY. "And nothing will remain. . . ." (*He brings her the book from the bookcase. Everyone is miserable. MICHAEL sticks his head in the front door.*)

MICHAEL (*beaming*). You've just five minutes to get to your class, Mr. Turner. We'll wait for you in the car. (*He goes out.*)

TOMMY (*bravely*). Well, so long, Joe. I know you'll get her a place of her own for a while anyway. You can take that four-poster money with you, Ellen. I'll have one more check coming, too. (*He starts slowly upstairs.*)

JOE. What's "four-poster money"?

ELLEN (*her voice trembling pathetically*). We were saving up to buy a new bed. (*She cries, and collapses on settee.*)

JOE. Oh, God, here we go again!

TOMMY (*comes back again, desperately*). *Why* did you have to ask what four-poster money is? (*To ELLEN*) Ellen, please.

ELLEN (*hysterically*). Oh, go on! Go on! Put on your coat. If you're going to be kicked out of school, you can't go over there looking like a tramp.

TOMMY (*balefully*). All right! (*He clumps upstairs like King Lear.*)

JOE. Look, Ellen, everything's gonna be all right.

ELLEN. Is it?

JOE (*looking after TOMMY*). I wouldn't worry about that guy.

ELLEN. I don't!

JOE. I mean he's sure to get another job. He's had more publicity than Wally Myers.

ELLEN. I don't care what becomes of him. (*JOE studies her drooping figure narrowly.*)

JOE. Come here. (*He pulls her to her feet, facing him*) You're still crazy about that guy, aren't you?

ELLEN. I'm kind of scared of him. He used to be just—nice, but now he's wonderful!

[TOMMY appears on stairs in time to catch the end of this. Very slowly light begins to dawn upon him. JOE sees him, but ELLEN doesn't.]

JOE. I don't think he's so wonderful.

ELLEN. Yes, he is! That letter's wonderful. What he's trying to do is wonderful. He wouldn't let me or you or anyone stop him. Even Ed.

JOE. He's a scrapper, all right, but he can't dance. (*He crosses to the Victrola, pulling her along. He has an idea and does everything for TOMMY's benefit. TOMMY comes down slowly. JOE turns on the Victrola, which plays "Who?"*)

ELLEN. Oh, who wants to dance now?

[JOE makes her dance, keeping her back to TOMMY.]

JOE. This is important. It's all in the light you give off.

ELLEN. Light? What are you talking about?

JOE (*with intensity*). The important thing about dancing is that the man has got to lead. (*He beckons to TOMMY; with one stride, TOMMY turns her away from JOE.*)

TOMMY. May I cut in?

ELLEN. Tommy! Let me go!

TOMMY (*shouting*). No, I think you're wonderful, too!

ELLEN. You think I'm dumb! Were you listening?

TOMMY. No, I wasn't.

JOE (*up near door*). Hey—don't start that again!

TOMMY (*puts on his hat, still dancing feverishly*). Joe—why don't you go back to your wife? We can send her a wire.

JOE. Don't worry about me, brother. I sent her a wire this morning. (*He goes out into the fresh air, a happy man. TOMMY still dances with ELLEN—they are almost in tears.*)

TOMMY. Quit leading!

ELLEN. I'm not leading! You *were* listening!

TOMMY. You were yelling. Well, turn!

ELLEN. Make me turn. (*He does*) Don't be so rough—and put your hat on straight! You look terrible! (*Half-crying, she throws her arms around TOMMY. They are kissing each other very, very hard as the*

CURTAIN FALLS

MAXWELL ANDERSON *Shakespeare and his contemporaries fixed blank verse as the recognized and theatrically successful medium for serious drama, both tragedies and historical plays. Modern playwrights who have followed that tradition have been less successful. Nearly all*

the great English poets of the nineteenth century tried in vain to revive poetic drama. In this century Maxwell Anderson (b. 1888) has made vigorous attempts to establish serious poetic drama on the American stage, not only historical plays like Elizabeth the Queen (1930), Mary of Scotland (1933), and Valley Forge (1934), but even plays of contemporary life like Winterset (1935) and Key Largo (1939). He has also demonstrated his talent for realism and satire in prose in What Price Glory?, the well-known anti-war play written in 1924 in collaboration with Laurence Stallings, and Both Your Houses, a satire on Congress which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1933.

KEY LARGO

CHARACTERS

VICTOR D'ALCALA	PRISCILLA
NIMMO	KILLARNEY
JERRY	MR. AARONSON
MONTE	MRS. AARONSON
KING MC CLOUD	MR. WHEELER
SHERIFF GASH	MRS. WHEELER
D'ALCALA	OSCEOLA HORN
ALEGRE D'ALCALA	1ST MAN TOURIST
GAGE	1ST WOMAN TOURIST
CORKY	2ND WOMAN TOURIST
MURILLO	JOHN HORN
HUNK	SAM

PROLOGUE

SCENE: *Bright moonlight comes down across a rocky hill-top in northern Spain, revealing four young men on outpost guard duty. They are Americans, dressed haphazardly in nondescript uniforms, zipper overalls and musti, well-worn and uncared-for. At the extreme left a pup-tent gapes open. One lad sits above, writing on a pad on his knee, occasionally looking off to the right and singing softly to himself. The others are rolled in their blankets near the tent or within it. There is a flash of light against the sky, followed, after an interval, by a far-away detonation.*

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VICTOR (*singing softly*).

Au clair de la lune,
Mon ami Pierrot,
Prête moi ta plume
Pour écrire un mot.

(*He rises, looks out left, then sits to finish his song.*)

Ma chandelle est morte,
Je n'ai plus de feu.
Ouvre moi ta porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu.

NIMMO. All right, howl, you dog. Howl the moon. Who cares if I sleep?

JERRY. Let him sing. It keeps him awake.

NIMMO. Me too. Isn't that a French song about the moon?

VICTOR. It is.

NIMMO. Well, why do you whine in French, you whelp of old Castile? You said your folks were Spanish.

VICTOR. Cradle songs are international, O Son of Chicago! I was writing a letter to my sister and she used to sing that song.

NIMMO. I hope she sings it better than you do.

VICTOR. She does. But I'll be quiet.

[*There is a silence for a moment, then MONTE rolls over on his back, looks up at the sky, and murmurs the song.*]

MONTE. Ma chandelle est morte,

Je n'ai plus de feu—

It has absolutely no meaning, that song. It's completely without meaning. But excellent poetry.

NIMMO. That's fine. Now can we just let the whole thing drop?

VICTOR. They had every chance to make it good poetry, with no meaning to worry about.

MONTE (*sniffing*). We'll have to move the tent, Victor. Those Moors stink like murder.

VICTOR. The wind'll change tomorrow.

MONTE. This is what it means, really. In prose:

Out in the moonlight,
My friend Pierrot,
Lend me your pen
To write a word.

There he is, out in the street, you observe, asking for writing materials. But then it goes on:

My candle is dead—
I have no more fire—
Open your door to me
For the love of God.

Still out in the moonlight, apparently, only now he's worrying about modern conveniences—and thinks maybe he'd better move in with his friend. The whole situation's baffling.

NIMMO. Are you really writing a letter to your sister, Victor?

VICTOR. I really am.

JERRY. You know, as near as I can remember, I never wrote to my sister in my life. I'm not bragging about it, but—

VICTOR. There are only three of us, and we've been alone a good deal, down there on Key Largo.

JERRY. Where's Key Largo?

VICTOR. In Florida. (*He lies flat with his gun.*) There's something climbing up the rocks.

JERRY. It's probably King and Shippy.

VICTOR. Last time we thought it was the patrol it wasn't.

NIMMO. God, I'm hungry!

JERRY. This living is a hand-to-mouth business. I certainly miss my dinner when I don't have it.

MONTE. Give them the owl.

VICTOR (*imitating*). Huh-who, huh-who-oo!

KING (*at a distance*). Huh-who-oo.

NIMMO. Good! We can eat! (*He stands up.*)

MONTE (*to Victor*). Satisfied?

VICTOR. That owl had an American accent. It's King, all right. But he seems to be alone.

[*Two or three boys look over the crest. Again the flash, the interval of silence, and the sound of the shell.*]

JERRY. Now why the hell would they keep a poor guy up all night shooting at the side of a mountain?

NIMMO. Maybe he can't hit it.

MONTE. There's nobody with King.

VICTOR. No. (*He stands upright.*) Where's Shippy?

KING (*outside*). Don't stand up there, boy. The moon's behind you, and that Greek profile of yours is visible at a hundred yards.

MONTE. Get down.

[*VICTOR does so.*]

KING. Get down and stay down, all of you. From here you look like so many ducks in a shooting gallery.

VICTOR. There's nobody between here and the road.

KING (*appearing, burdened with two heavy sacks*). There wasn't this morning, but there is now. (*He leaps down among them.*) I saw two trucks parked on the road without lights, just south of the turn. Somebody must have come in them.

MONTE. Where's Shippy?

KING (*opening a sack*). That's right, that was this morning, wasn't it? It seems like a week ago. That big gun laid one down right outside the village. We both dropped and Shippy didn't get up. He's in the hospital, but he won't live. I didn't want to leave him alone, but I had to get your damned grub up to you.

VICTOR. Is he conscious?

KING. No. And he won't be any more.—This is mostly dry-pack—chocolate and biscuits. (*He hands out packages; the boys take them in silence. One or two begin to eat.*) There's one cut of salami.

NIMMO. That's my meat.

KING. Cut in five equal portions and distribute. (*He hands over the sausage.*)

NIMMO. Five? That's right, it's five now. Eight, seven, six, five.

MONTE. We've been lucky, comparatively. Whole companies have been wiped out, not a man left to turn in a report. We're used to being lucky and it hits us hard when somebody goes.

VICTOR. You're sure he won't come to enough to talk?

KING. Positive.

JERRY. This is the God damndest loneliest mountain this side of hell.

NIMMO. Well, take your section. Salami's salami whether it's in six cuts or five.

MONTE. Aren't we beginning to talk like a lot of drafted men with a choice between prison and the front line? We volunteered, mind you. It isn't our fight, and it never was our fight, but we made it our fight. We said that to each other before we came over here—we said if a lot of good, healthy men don't die for Spain right now there won't be any place on earth where a free man can live in a couple of years. Well, we're in Spain, and three of us are dead in Spain—and will stay dead for the rest of time. Maybe we'll all die and stay dead—but the original proposition remains unchanged. I admit it's getting pretty close, and I don't find it very comfortable, but if I can manage to keep my food down maybe I'll stick it out.

JERRY. To say nothing of the fact that you'd damn well better stick it out now you're here. Because if you don't they'll stand you up against an outhouse and shoot you.

MONTE. I guess we all know the honeymoon's over.

NIMMO. It's not that so much. It's mostly you don't like yourself as much as you did—or respect yourself. When you're in a fight it doesn't count how you got in it, or what you're out to get. You have to crawl on your belly and rip up the other fellow's guts just the same. And it does something to you. Because it's a stinking business, and it makes you stink.

KING. Quit talking, and eat your food. You'll need it before the night's over.

JERRY. But the worst is you don't know what you're out to get.

NIMMO. We thought we did before we started. We said, no matter what they do with their freedom, they have a right to keep it. But suppose the first thing they do with their freedom is assert their right to put on chains? We believe in the rights of minorities, don't we? Well, there are fifty-seven minorities in Loyalist Spain, all pretty sharp with each other, but willing to drop the arguments while they deal with Franco. They're Anarchists, Communists, Leftists, Rightists, Leftist-rightists, Rightist-leftists, Socialists, Leftist-Socialists, Rightist-Socialists, Anti-clericals, Clerical-Communists, Loyalist soldiers, police, crazy people, and once in a while just a plain farmer, all fighting Franco! But if they won and it came to a vote, and one party was in power, would it make hash of the other fifty-six varieties! They're very intense about politics, these Spanish. Once they get in an argument, they

don't care how long they live, and they don't think it matters about you, either. Each one of them intends to live as he God damn pleases, and he intends to see to it that everybody else lives the way he wants them to!

VICTOR. They may be somewhat intolerant, but after all freedom's fairly new to them. They don't know how to use it. And if there's a good fight anywhere in the world it's here.

NIMMO. Franco's low enough, God knows. When you think about Franco you think any man ought to be proud to die fighting that complete son-of-a-bitch, but then you think about the bloody mess on this side, and you wonder.

JERRY. You wonder, for one thing, why the Red Ogpu's running our Brigade, and why you're likely to disappear if you can't pretend you're a Communist. Are we fighting for a democratic Spain or to make the world safe for Stalin?

MONTE. The Loyalists wouldn't have got this far without Stalin—and naturally the leaders take help wherever they can get it.

JERRY. He charges a high price for his help. I don't like the Ogpu any more than Franco. The question is whether Spain would be free even if the Loyalists won.

MONTE. She won't be free if the Loyalists lose, of course.

VICTOR. Hasn't it always looked the same, the fight for freedom? It's never respectable. It's led by unscrupulous fanatics, each one eyeing the others' throats. They're followed by a rabble that pulls down all the walls and lets the roofs fall in on them. A lot of people die, good and bad, but there is more freedom later, for the next generation, there is. If you want a clean, Armageddon battle, all the beasts of hell against the angels of light, you won't get that, not in this world.

NIMMO. No.—Well, I'm not complaining, except about the food.—Will you look at King, working away with a needle and thread by moonlight, on his old gabardine. Did you meet a girl in the village, you lug, and did she have black eyes, and did they find that hole in your coat?

KING. I'm not sewing—

I'm—as the old women say—I'm ripping out. (*He pulls a tag loose.*)

That's what they look for first—your tags.

MONTE. How come?

KING. When you've had enough to eat pack up what's left to go along, get out your razor blades and rip off labels—for we're changing names and seeping out of here.

MONTE. Are we ordered out?

KING. No.

But I led you here. I'm responsible,
and I mean to get you out.

JERRY (*saluting*).

As you say, commandante.

Here's to hell or Paris. But I prefer Paris.

MONTE. Remember, King,

this is a democratic army, and even
anarchistic in spots—we'd want to know
what's on your mind, because we have minds of our own,
all of us.

KING. Why certainly. Take a vote.

I was at that wine-shop back of the convent
waiting to hear how Shippy came out, when in
walked a couple of officers, spread out their maps
and went to work. I guess they didn't see me.
I was up in the alcove. Well, there's to be
a general retirement along this line;
our ridge is being abandoned; they're falling back
three miles to the rear.

VICTOR. When?

KING. Tonight and part of tomorrow.

There's a lot of stuff to move, and it takes time;
they want to be out before Mr. Franco's scouts
begin to notice. Have we had marching orders?

Are we going anywhere?

MONTE. Not that I know of.

KING. No, and you won't get any.

We're left to hold the ridge.

MONTE. How do you know?

KING. I heard something vague about Hill 4—
how it would take them anyway twenty-four hours
to blast us out of here, and by that time
they'd be dug in three miles back.

MONTE. They're leaving us
to cover the retreat?

KING. That's what I gathered.

And why not? It's good strategy. This salient's
way out of line, and never could be held
in a general assault. But if they withdrew
without a rear-guard action they'd be caught
in the valley and massacred. They have to choose
between losing a lot of men and losing a few,
and we're picked for the few. Personally I don't take it.
I'm fed up with the war, and the whole damn setup
from God and Chamberlain on down. I'm ripping
a few identification marks and labels

off my clothes and leaving. And so are you.

JERRY. How about passports?

KING. Well, I hold my passport dear,
and I've hugged it pretty close, but not so dear
and not so close as my life.

JERRY. Could a man get through
without one?

KING. He could try. He might live. But he won't
if he sits here and waits.

MONTE. How sure is this?

KING. From what I heard I'd say it's certain.

NIMMO. God— (*He crosses the stage to KING.*)
wait a minute! We're going to die here?

KING. Boy,
you're thick, but when a notion penetrates,
there's a reaction!

MONTE. We're stationed here, you know.

KING. And I know what for.

JERRY. We have orders to hold the hill.
There's no getting out of that.

KING. There may not be,
but we can leave it, and try.

MONTE. And the companies
moving back, who's going to cover them
if we're not here?

KING. It's going to be tough for them,
almost as tough for them if we're not here
as it is for us if we are.

NIMMO. And if you're caught
they shoot you.

KING. Without doubt. If they know who you are.
But the poor ragged sons of bastards that run
this war, how can they keep track of the other bastards
that fight it for them? We'll get up some sob story
on the way down—and, by the way, if we're going
we'd better hump it. I want to be ten miles
from here by morning. Once the trouble starts
it'll be too late. Get ready with your packs
if you're coming with me.

MONTE. An ignominious exit
from our crusade.

KING. Was there ever a crusade
without an ignominious end? Before
we came to Spain we should have thought of that.
The knights in rusty armor crippling home
with an increment of blood and bone diseases

from Palestine—leaving the infidels in charge as usual. Or the A. E. F. over-seas for democracy, and winning—along with other diseases—this Mussolini and Hitler. Yes, and Franco, very likely.

VICTOR. Isn't this a graver matter than you pretend, King?

KING. It's running for your life.

That's grave enough.

VICTOR. If we go it's more than an end to our crusade. It's an end to everything we were, everything we talked of in your room under the skylight, an end to all the meaning you found in the world. We haven't talked much lately. I thought it was only because there wasn't time, but maybe you've changed and haven't told us.

KING. I have.

I was trying to hold on. When you've believed that right wins in the end it's a little hard to turn round suddenly on a battle-front and say the hell with it.

VICTOR. But you've turned round now, and said it?

KING. Yes.

VICTOR. But right does win in the end.

KING. Only if you believe whoever wins is right in the end. Because we're losing here—and dying here!

VICTOR. You have been our leader, King.

Certainly you've been mine. We haven't been cowards, any of us, but we've let you show the way most of the time. Are we suddenly afraid to die, when suddenly it's necessary?

Are you afraid? If you are then it's come about between tonight and this morning.

KING. Nobody's afraid

to die when he sees good reason for it. Hell, we're not here for fun! We came believing there was some use in it! Maybe some of us think there still is use. I've been trying to hold on this last half-year—I've been trying to believe the whole world would rise up and step on this evil that crawls over Spain—and it has risen up, and stepped on us. And now I'm beginning to wonder if a cause is sacred when it's lost. Did we volunteer

to die in a lost cause?

VICTOR. What's gone? What's changed
since yesterday?

KING. Our cause is lost, that's all.

Maybe because there isn't any God
and nobody cares who wins. Anyway if you win
you never get what you fight for, never get
the least approximation of the thing
you were sold on when you enlisted. No, you find
instead that you were fighting to impose
some monstrous, bloody injustice, some revenge
that would end in another war.

MONTE. Why do you say

our cause is lost, and Franco will win in Spain?
Is there news of Franco? Is the war lost for us?
We've told ourselves we couldn't lose.

KING. Well, we can.

This was between the lines of what they said—
the officers—the war's at an end in Spain—
this withdrawal, it's part of a larger movement—
falling back on Madrid, getting ready to ask for terms;
I don't know what else—but the end.

MONTE. Then I understand you.

KING. I should think you would.

JERRY. And the war's over.

KING. That I can't swear to. It was never said,
only by hints, indirectly, but I got it,
enough to convince me.

NIMMO. I never thought of the end.

I never thought of that part.

MONTE. So it's not only
we cover a retreat—but the war's lost
and we die for a lost cause.

KING. So get your duffle,

and we'll move out. Look, we were children,
suckled in one of these nutmeg Alma Maters,
and Spain was a bugle call. Up and to Spain
and save the world! Byron went out to Greece
about a hundred years ago and died
in a swamp of the fever. Don Quixote
went out against the windmills. It was a Spaniard
who knew his Spain well enough to write Quixote—
and we should have read it.—I know I'm a turncoat;
it was my romantic notion to save Spain,
and I was eloquent about it. Yes,
maybe I thought I talked like Rupert Brooke—

for all I know maybe I thought I looked like that poor Galahad of Gallipoli, saving heaven for the angels.—The best I can do now is be fairly honest about it, and get you out and get myself out. They say there's just one test for whether a man's a fool—it's how long he lives and how well.

JERRY. There's not much to carry. It won't take long. Shall we pack up?

NIMMO. I think so.

MONTE. And those three hundred on the ridge to the south—if we're not here they're caught; they'll be wide open crossing the valley. Look, couldn't we get word to them?

NIMMO. Not before morning.

JERRY. Well, let it go.

VICTOR. Is it decided?

NIMMO. Yes. What can we do?

VICTOR. Then I'll play anarchist tonight. I'll stay here.

MONTE. Alone?

VICTOR. I like company—

but if I'm alone, I'm alone. Don't think I blame you. You went into it for any number of reasons, mostly perishable, as King says. You could leave and go on living, but I couldn't. I'm a Spaniard, or my father is, and all my blood and belief are in this fight here. I was brought up to think of Spain and freedom first in the morning, and first at night. It took the place of prayers with us; but that's because my father's a little crazy, according to the neighbors, and I'm infected—not that I mind.

KING. Wait a minute, Victor!

You can't stay here alone.

VICTOR. Oh, yes, I can.

That's the anarchist angle of this army—every man his own captain. I can stay if I wish, and those who wish to go, can go. So I'll sit here.

KING. You can't hold them alone, you know.

You'll die for nothing. They'll walk right over you.

Won't even pause.

VICTOR. Well—

KING. Then why do it? Why sit here and get yourself murdered?

VICTOR. Because there is no God.

KING. What do you mean?

VICTOR. Because the sky's quite empty,
just as you said. The scientists have been over it
with a fine-tooth comb and a telescope, and the verdict
is, No God, nothing there. Empty and sterilized,
like a boiled test-tube. But if there's no God there
and nothing inside me I have any respect for
then I'm done. Then I don't live, and I couldn't.
So I stay here to keep whatever it is
alive that's alive inside me.

KING. It's not only the sky
that's empty, remember. They've looked us through pretty well,
and men and horses are pure chemistry
so far as anybody knows. The soul—
or psyche—has the same composition
as eggs and butter.

VICTOR. It's too late
to change. I know what I live by, and I'll die by it.
It's more important than living.

KING. What you live by?

VICTOR. Yes.

KING. Then what is it? Tell us.

VICTOR. I'd rather not.

KING. If it's like all the other faiths I've ever known
it's nothing you can put your finger on,
or say in words, or put any trust in, and so
it's nothing. A pocket of air under the vest.
That's why it can't be stated.

VICTOR. I have to believe
there's something in the world that isn't evil—
I have to believe there's something in the world
that would rather die than accept injustice—something
positive for good—that can't be killed—
or I'll die inside. And now that the sky's found empty
a man has to be his own god for himself—
has to prove to himself that a man can die
for what he believes—if ever the time comes to him
when he's asked to choose, and it just so happens
it's up to me tonight.—And I stay here.
I don't say it's up to you—I couldn't tell
about another man—or any of you—
but I know it's up to me.

KING. Is it up to us still,
after all the betrayals, after the game's changed
and we're cheated on both sides? After the Russian

secret police taking over our own brigade? And Munich,
and Czechoslovakia, and this last betrayal
of Spain by France and England? We should know
by this time—we've looked at Europe long enough
to know there's nothing to fight for here—that nothing
you win means freedom or equality
or justice—that all the formulas are false—
and known to be false—democracy, communism,
socialism, naziism—dead religions
nobody believes in—or if he does believe
he's quietly made use of by the boys
who long ago learned better, and believe
in nothing but themselves. Let it end—let them end it—
these idiot ideologies that snarl
across borders at each other. Stalin walking
his swamps in blood, Hitler's swastikas
in blood above the lintels, the English and French
desperate because everything has failed,
because life itself has failed, and capitalism,
and they may even lose their colonies,
unless God can be revived. And here in Spain,
Franco will win in Spain, they'll see to that—
but if he didn't, Stalin would win in Spain,
and it's one blood-purge or the other, but never justice,
only the rat-men ratting on each other
in a kind of rat despair.—I tell you it was a dream,
all a dream we had, in a dream world,
of brothers who put out a helping hand
to brothers, and might save them.—Long ago
men found out the sky was empty; it follows
that men are a silly accident, meaningless,
here in the empty sky, like a flag on the moon,
as meaningless as an expedition led
to take possession of it—in the name of Marx—
or maybe democracy—or social justice!
Why should we die here for a dead cause, for a symbol,
on these empty ramparts, where there's nothing to win,
even if you could win it?

VICTOR. Yes, but if I die

then I know men will never give in;
then I'll know there's something in the race
of men, because even I had it, that hates injustice
more than it wants to live.—Because even I had it—
and I'm no hero.—And that means the Hitlers
and the Mussolinis always lose in the end—
force loses in the long run, and the spirit wins,

whatever spirit is. Anyway it's the thing
that says it's better to sit here with the moon
and hold them off while I can. If I went with you
I'd never know whether the race was turning
down again, to the dinosaurs—this way
I keep my faith. In myself and what men are.
And in what we may be.

KING. Well—

VICTOR. Oh, I know all this
sounds priggish—it's the manly thing to joke
in extremis—but just for the record let it stand,
and now we'll forget it.

KING. If you won't argue
there's no arguing. I only wish
we could all stick together. Are we ready?

JERRY. One minute.

[NIMMO and JERRY pick up to go.]

MONTE. I guess I'll stick with Victor.

JERRY (*stopping suddenly*).

Yes. I'll stay.

I'll stay, too.

KING. It's Nimmo and me then.

NIMMO. I can't go.

With the four of us we might hold them. Long enough—
while the shock troops got away.

JERRY. By God, we might—
with the four of us.

KING. It seems I was wrong
and nobody needs advice. I could have saved
the walk up here and down. Why, you God damn fools,
what do you care what the Sunday-school teachers say
if you can live?

JERRY (*tremulously*). That's all right.

[KING picks up his gun and pack and steps to the embankment by which
he entered. As he stands silhouetted he turns to them.]

KING. It's not cowardice, you know,
It's plain, common, everyday horse-sense;
it's not me that's crazy.

[*They are silent, looking up at him.*]

Don't you see I can't save you,
but you can save yourselves, and if you don't
I'll run from you all like a pack of ghosts?

VICTOR. But you shouldn't.

You shouldn't, King. Why can't you think of us
as among the fortunate few whose lives have had
a meaning right up to the end? And not as heroes—

just ordinary fellows who ate breakfast
on a certain morning—and then ate lunch and dinner
and slept exceptionally long that night—
as why shouldn't they?

KING. Well, anything I can do?

You were writing a letter.

VICTOR. It isn't finished,

and it wasn't important. Give me your hand, though.

KING. Good-bye.

VICTOR. You're doing what you believe, and that's all that
matters.

[KING comes down and takes VICTOR's hand, then turns and goes
down the hill.]

MONTE. Has it occurred to you—here in the moonlight—
there's a resemblance between these Spanish mountains
and the mountains of the moon?

[Again the flash, and the detonation.]

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE: *The scene is a wharf on Key Largo from which one looks north and west across the Gulf of Mexico. The planks end at the water, and the blue sea runs out into a blue sky, with a sharp blue demarcation along the horizon. At the left is the wall of a one-story house, thatched with palm branches and Spanish bayonet. A section of porch faces the audience and a door opens on to the wharf from it. At the right a summer house, thatched and partially sided with the same materials, covers an outdoor table and some chairs. A line or two of boat rigging is visible above the wharf. It is morning.*

SHERIFF GASH, a tall, middle-aged man in leather boots, comes in from the left, in front of the house, and knocks on the door. It is opened by an elderly man who wears dark glasses.

GASH. Your name's d'Alcala?

D'ALCALA. Bruno d'Alcala, yes.

GASH. This is your place?

D'ALCALA. Yes.

GASH. I was about to ask you—

is something the matter with your eyes?

D'ALCALA. I'm blind.

GASH. Yeah, I was about to ask you if you'd seen
a couple of run-away Seminole boys; I guess
you're the wrong man to ask. Another thing,
you have a son called Victor? (*He takes out a little book.*)

D'ALCALA. I had a son
called Victor. He was killed in Spain last winter—
early this year.

GASH. He was killed?

D'ALCALA. Yes, sir.

GASH. I see.

The reason I asked, there's something on the books
about a charge against him, maybe two years
or so ago—giving aid or sheltering
a fellow from a road gang. That's why I came in.
But the boy's dead?

D'ALCALA. I wish he were alive
to answer for himself. But since I must say it,
he's dead, and I answer for him.

GASH. Who's hereabout
that might have seen these Indians passing through?
I'm Sheriff Gash of the Star Keys, in case
you should want to know.

D'ALCALA. Sir, if you'll ask my daughter—
she's here, I think. I heard her set the rake
against the house.

[ALEGRE comes round the corner of the house, wearing a wide
sun-hat and carrying a basket.]

This is Sheriff Gash, Alegre,
wanting to know about some Seminole boys
that might have passed this way.

ALEGRE. I haven't seen them.

No, I've seen no one.

GASH. Part of a road gang—
been gone two days and a half—might have got rid
of the stripes by this time—one of them middle-aged,
but looks young, one a boy.

ALEGRE. I haven't seen them.

No one's been by.

GASH. Who's staying here? Any transients?

ALEGRE. Just one party. Professional people—at least
that's what they call it. Now that you're here, Sheriff Gash,
what's the procedure when a little group
of professional gamblers rents all the rooms you have,
sets up its paraphernalia on the wharf
and refuses to leave?

GASH. What's the complaint against them?

ALEGRE. They're gamblers. And not honest.

GASH. They pay their rent?

ALEGRE. Yes, but they'll ruin our trade.

They fleece the tourists

and give the place a bad name.
Haven't we the right to choose
what kind of people stay here?

GASH. No,
not if there's nothing against them. Just at present
this whole county's lenient and wide open
when it comes to any kind of gambling. No,
you've got to take what comes.

ALEGRE. The games are rigged
and faked—it's all mechanically done—
they boast of having purchased the devices
by mail, show you the catalogues.

GASH. They're taking a chance,
but that's their own affair. Now I've got to go;
you'll let me know if you hear of those fellows—?

D'ALCALA. Yes,
we'll watch out for them. But before you go
one word about the gamblers. If you wish them well—
if you have any personal concern—

GASH. I have none.

D'ALCALA. If you know anyone who has, then tell him
they've burned out their welcome here, and it's high time
they leave the Key. There's misfortune in the wind,
particularly for Murillo.

GASH. You don't want him here,
and I don't blame you, but that's hardly news.
The law can't deal with prophecy, you know;
only with facts.

D'ALCALA. If I should have to wait
for what you'd recognize as facts, your friend
might not thank you.

GASH. Who said he was my friend?

D'ALCALA. I beg your pardon.

GASH. When you've information
to lodge, produce it. When you start prophesying
it sounds too much like a threat. Good day to you.
Good day, ma'am.

D'ALCALA. Very well, I'll tell you plainly,
I think you take money from them.

GASH. And that kind of talk
doesn't make for friendship! (*He goes out.*)

ALEGRE. Murillo will leave, no doubt.
It must be dangerous for him when he's known,
and he'll soon be known here.

D'ALCALA. Give me the basket.

ALEGRE. I'll carry it.

D'ALCALA. Let me be useful in my darkness—
or seem so.—Yes?

ALEGRE. Those Indians and this sheriff—

D'ALCALA. Yes?

ALEGRE. I lied to him. There are two Indians hiding
under water in the mangrove swamp. I saw them
from the clam-flats yesterday, and again today—
I've just come from there.

D'ALCALA. Well, that's God's lie,
as your mother would have said. And modern science
is less and less insistent on the truth,
seeing there is none.

ALEGRE. But we're so constructed,
what with our antique conscience, and whatever
makes us blush, that we can't prevaricate
without a sense of fear. It was worse than I told you.
I put some of Victor's old clothes in my basket
when I went for clams, this morning, and left them there out of reach of
the tide. They'll find them, because I saw where they'd been digging clams.

D'ALCALA. May they find them, and Godspeed
to all poor fugitives. We've seen no one and nothing,
and you were quite right to say so.

ALEGRE. Then that's all clear—
For a moment I thought it might be sacrilege
to let his clothes go walking down the beach
on some lost vagrant. They were all he left
and had his shape still in them.—

D'ALCALA. It doesn't help
to hang things in a closet, and take them out
on rainy days when you're lonely. I tried that
and it doesn't help.—The Indians are still there,
still hiding among the mangroves?

ALEGRE. Yes. They must be.
They won't dare leave till dark. Only two black heads
bobbing behind the roots. They won't be seen
even if there's a search.

D'ALCALA. Would they do something for us?
Would they do us a favor? A favor in return?

ALEGRE. I think they would.

Yes, I saw their faces.

D'ALCALA. If I had my eyes
I wouldn't need an Indian or anyone else
to teach this sheriff! God, if I had my eyes!

ALEGRE. If I could see for you—

D'ALCALA. You could take a message
and leave it with the clothes.

ALEGRE. The truth is, father,
I meant to put some breakfast in a basket
and take it down later on. What shall I tell them?

D'ALCALA. Only that I must talk to one of them,
tonight, if it's possible. But go instantly.

ALEGRE. I must make up a basket.

D'ALCALA. It may be
even a blind man can see beyond them.

[*He goes in, she follows. GAGE and CORKY come in from the right, carrying some scaffolding and a table-top which they proceed to set up on the wharf.*]

GAGE. Set it square in those bolt-holes or the nuts won't draw up.

CORKY. Yeah, bo, I know about that. My uncle kept a hardware store. I know about nuts and bolts.

GAGE. Well, pull them up tight, because if they're loose the control won't work.

[*ALEGRE enters with a basket, pauses, and then crosses to the summer house.*]

CORKY. Not much traffic this morning and what there is is Florida natives exploding along on ten-cent gas.

GAGE. Any liquid that's more than ten cents a gallon a Florida cracker just naturally considers it's a beverage and drinks it.

CORKY. Imagine a cracker about to visit St. Augustine. He stands beside the jalopy with a gallon jug in his hand. "Wife," he says, "do I pour it in the tank, or do we drink it and push her?" (*To ALEGRE*) Listen, Winsome, will you do me a favor?

ALEGRE. What is it?

CORKY. Take a spin down the Long Bridge and have a coconut rum with me tonight. One of those and you can almost see the Southern Cross from Key West. Two of them and you can see it but you don't care.

ALEGRE. Thank you. (*She goes out round the house.*)

CORKY. How long do you suppose it would take for a guy to make that dame? Three days?

GAGE. I saw the boss looking at that girl. You haven't got a chance.

CORKY. Mussolini? Listen, he better keep out of my way or I'll make a non-aggression pact with him.

GAGE. Well, anyway, if it's going to take three days you might as well give up. We won't be here three days.

CORKY. Mussolini said a week.

GAGE. Don't make any plans in this neighborhood.

CORKY. What do you know?

GAGE. We're in trouble.

CORKY. Something wrong with the protection?

GAGE. You can't be protected for what happened last night.

CORKY. No? There's only one thing you can't be protected for.

GAGE. That's right.

CORKY. Who got it?

GAGE. You remember the big fellow that lost all the expense money and made a play for the boss's girl?

CORKY. Yeah.

GAGE. Now I didn't see this—and I don't know anything about it if anybody asks me, but I'm willing to bet he's sunk out there in forty feet of water with a turn of steel clothesline around his arms, a bag of coral hung on his feet, and a school of these tropical fishes taking little bites out of his ears.

CORKY. Don't be so graphic. (*He rubs his ears.*)

GAGE. I don't know anything about it from now on.

CORKY. You mean the guy came back last night?

GAGE. I heard a little brawl, and a few other noises. So I say we're not going to be here very long.

CORKY. You don't know Mussolini. He's been followed by dead meat before and it never catches up with him. He never even worries about it. He wouldn't think of pulling out on account of dead meat in the water.

GAGE. Well, I would.

CORKY. So would I.

GAGE. If you should ever think of going somewhere else let me know, will you?

CORKY. Maybe I will. Yeah, I will. (*He reaches a hand to GAGE.*)

GAGE. Because I've been thinking about it for some time.

[MURILLO and HUNK enter, followed at some distance by two girls, PRISCILLA and KILLARNEY.]

MURILLO (*inspecting the crude wheel-of-fortune*). Listen, Corky, somebody says you've been calling me Mussolini.

CORKY. Me? Maybe in fun, boss. Just in fun. Just because you're the boss.

MURILLO. I don't think it's funny. My name's Murillo, in case you want to know.

CORKY. I get it.

MURILLO. And there's no castor oil in my family. Castor oil is probably all right for reformers, but I don't take much interest in reform.

KILLARNEY. No, he's all for passive resistance, Murillo is. Just Mahatma Gandhi with his clothes on.

MURILLO. Shut up!

KILLARNEY. You hear that? Mild and amiable.

MURILLO (*to HUNK*). Did a car turn in?

HUNK. Naw—I been watching the road.

MURILLO (*to CORKY*). Let me see it spin. And tune your mouth down from now on! (*He tries out the wheel.*)

KILLARNEY. You've said it twice already, haven't you?

MURILLO. What?

KILLARNEY. Lay off the boy. He talks well, and he's good looking, and some of us like him, even if you don't.

MURILLO. What do you mean by that?

KILLARNEY. What I said.

MURILLO. Any time you want to start more trouble, baby, just put in your nominations.

KILLARNEY. Haven't you got enough hanging over you now? For no God damn reason at all?

MURILLO. I had my reasons!

KILLARNEY. For no God damn reason at all! And how long do you think anybody's going to stick with you? With that around your neck?

PRISCILLA. What's the argument about?

HUNK. Damn if I know.

MURILLO. Let it end where it is, then. And no more talk, you fool!

KILLARNEY. Good. Only I still insist that Corky has curly hair.

MURILLO (*ignoring her*). Spin it. Spin it again. Again. Stop it on red. Stop it on zero. Stop it on seven.

[*As they watch the machine perform KING enters from the right and takes in the situation briefly. He's still wearing his bedraggled khaki.*]

HUNK (*to MURILLO*). One from the north, walking. (*He stops the wheel.*)

MURILLO (*hard*). Looking for something, neighbor?

KING. Can you tell me who lives here?

MURILLO. We all live here.

KING. Thanks. (*He glances again at the contraption, looks at the door, decides not to knock, and goes out around the far side of the house.*)

MURILLO. See where he goes.

[*HUNK follows and looks after KING, then returns.*]

HUNK. Just strolling.

PRISCILLA. Whatever kind of uniform is that?

GAGE. Whatever kind it is there's a gun goes with it.

HUNK. It ain't no variety of state trooper I ever saw. And I've seen several.

GAGE. Think he's snooping on us?

MURILLO. Why would he walk here if he's an officer? I never knew an officer to walk anywhere he could ride. I'd say he was a soldier out of a job.

HUNK (*watching*). What the hell?

MURILLO. Yeah?

HUNK. He's taking off his shoes. (*A pause*) His feet must be tired. He's fixing to wash his feet in the Gulf of Mexico.

MURILLO. I guess we don't worry about him.

GAGE. There's a car on the way in. Packard sedan. Two women and two men. Just looking around. Packard Twelve, by God. Got plenty of money, and look as if they carried it.

MURILLO. Get ready. (*They all gather round the wheel-of-fortune as if interested in a game. MURILLO spins the wheel.*) Get around to that side, you girls. Spread out a little. And this time no off-hand remarks, if you don't mind. Nothing except what's been rehearsed, and if you can't remember your lines keep quiet. I run this show alone, and you can count on it any-

thing you think of to say is wrong. It just so happens you never queered anything yet, but you will if you go on trying.

[MR. *and* MRS. AARONSON *and* MR. *and* MRS. WHEELER *come round the corner.*]

MRS. AARONSON. What a darling place! But really darling! It's an inn, too, you know. Rooms and special dinners the sign said.

MRS. WHEELER. Don't you love it?

MRS. AARONSON. I want to stay here all the rest of the time! Can't we stay here, darling?

AARONSON. I haven't asked yet.

MRS. AARONSON. It's perfectly lovely.

MURILLO (*as the wheel stops*). Well, there you are, ladies and gentlemen! Red again! Forty dollars for this gentleman, fifty dollars for this other gentleman; am I right, please—? Correct me if I'm wrong! Seventy-five dollars for this lady, and eighty dollars to the lady in red! Count your winnings, ladies and gentlemen, count your winnings! I want to see everybody satisfied! A satisfied customer is the best advertisement to an established house! Correct, sir, correct, madam?

CORKY. Absolutely.

KILLARNEY. Mac, I won eighty dollars! Look!

CORKY. Don't throw it around, now!

MURILLO. That's right, lady. Money saved is money earned, as the old saying goes. Looks like the house was the big loser today, but we'll have to take it and smile, ladies and gentlemen. When I bought this machine they told me the house makes a percentage in the long run—and I'm depending on that, ladies and gentlemen. So far the house is a big loser, but you can count on it, win or lose, lose or win, we play the game square and pay up in the end. Count your money, lady.

PRISCILLA. Yes, sir. Look, John!

MRS. AARONSON. This is where I spend the day! Oh, darling, it's a betting machine. Where's my money!

AARONSON. Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

MRS. WHEELER. Look at the funny home-made wheel!

MRS. AARONSON. Please, don't let them start till I've got my money down!

WHEELER. What do you call this game?

MURILLO. Does anybody else wish to join in our backwoods pastime? This, sir, is a wheel-of-fortune, the rural version of what they call roulette in the gilded halls of Monaco!—Only here we play it straight, gentlemen, on a home-made contrivance, absolutely uncontrollable and honest; anybody can spin it, anybody can win! Everybody does win, as these folks will tell you! Round it goes like this, ladies and gentlemen—that's right, the lady may spin it if she wishes—and every time it stops on red you get double your money! Every time it stops on black we double the bet! You can't lose; you honestly and truly can't lose! Only a dollar to get in the game, folks; anybody can afford a dollar! Here's a lady put down a dollar and picked up

eighty—here's a gentleman put down a dollar and picked up seventy-five! A little hard on the house, friends, but we can still pay!

[KING returns around the house and joins the crowd.]

Put down one dollar each; you're gambling on the red—I'm gambling on the black! And just to make it more attractive if it comes up red the first time I pay five to one! Five to one, friends and neighbors, if it comes up red on the first spin.

[The newcomers put their dollars down. KING puts down his dollar, getting a sharp look in return.]

MRS. AARONSON. But you can't lose!

MURILLO. Exactly! You can't possibly lose! Wait now, wait now! It's a good spin! It's an honest wheel, I tell you! It's coming red, it can't miss that red now! Red! The house pays five to one—here you are, friends. (*He pays MR. and MRS. AARONSON, MR. and MRS. WHEELER, and KING.*) Who goes with me on another little spin—the house pays five to one if it stops on red? Who's in on it?

CORKY (*to AARONSON*). Jeez, this bird's an amateur. He's been losing money to the whole crowd, hand over fist.

MRS. WHEELER. I don't see how we could lose.

MURILLO. Right-o! You can't lose, as the little lady says. There you are, everybody back in for the second spin at five to one; you play red, and I play black! Wish to play, sir?

KING. Right. (*He puts down his five.*)

MURILLO. All down? Everybody in that's coming in? (*He spins.*) Five to one, ladies and gentlemen! If it comes up red you win twenty-five dollars each—and red it is! (*He pays.*) Red it is! What the hell! It's Roosevelt money, anyway, fiat money, unsupported by specie, badly inflated and negotiable only because Barnum was right! Take the money! Who wants to try one more spin at five to one? You can't lose, friends—you've got one dollar invested and if it comes up red you win a hundred and twenty-five!

MRS. AARONSON. Here's mine! Put your money down, darling.

MURILLO. Everybody down! We're playing in bad luck, ladies and gentlemen—the house is losing money fast, but we're still good for it. Wish to play, sir?

KING. Not this whirl. (*He sits down and counts his money.*)

MURILLO. Very well. The gentleman's out. He doesn't want a chance at easy money. Does the lady wish to spin the wheel? A good spin, lady! Not too hard, not too easy, a professional hand in every way! It's coming red again, it's coming red, watch the indicator, it's creeping, ladies and gentlemen—it's creeping. Luckiest wheel you ever saw in your lives! It'll make red yet, just a little more, just a little more! Let me call your attention to the fact that there's three times as many red as black spaces! Come now, come—creep, creep a shade more—Sorry, ladies and gentlemen, it's black, and the game's five to one. I'd much rather it came out the other way, because I took a liking to you at once, but there it is, and nothing we can do about it. Pay the house a hundred and twenty-five.

WHEELER. What?

MURILLO. Pay the house a hundred and twenty-five.

WHEELER. I don't see that.

MURILLO. It's a very simple game, sir. If it had come up red, I'd have paid you a hundred and twenty-five. It came up black, which means you pay me a hundred and twenty-five.

MRS. AARONSON. Each of us?

MURILLO. Naturally, each of you.

MRS. WHEELER. But how did this happen?

MRS. AARONSON. I simply don't follow you.

AARONSON. I won't pay it. It's a gyp, by God!

MURILLO. I think you will. It's a perfectly fair and honest game, sir. You came into it of your own free will. You took my money without question. I think you'll all pay.

AARONSON. Then you've got another think coming. Come on, everybody.

MURILLO (*his hand on AARONSON's arm*). It'll be much better if you don't make trouble. I've got a partner here I never know what he's going to do, see?

AARONSON. Take your hand off my arm!

MURILLO. Certainly. But take care what you do! If you don't want to gamble you should keep out of gambling games.

AARONSON (*looking about and finding himself surrounded*). By God, it's a gang! The whole damn thing's a frame-up! We walked into a trap.

MURILLO. I'd advise you to pay, sir, before my partner makes trouble.

AARONSON. All right. (*He takes out his wallet.*)

MRS. AARONSON. Well, I won't pay!

MRS. WHEELER. And I won't!

MR. WHEELER. Oh, yes, you will—or I will for you.

[*He counts out bills and gives them to MURILLO. AARONSON does the same. KING slips casually out to the right. In grim silence the party of tourists troops toward the left.*]

AARONSON. Four hundred dollars! Jesus Christ, what a nest of banditti! (*He goes.*)

MURILLO. Give me the currency. (*They hand him back the money they won in the fake game.*) Where's that son-of-a-bitch that took the thirty from me?

HUNK. He was right there a minute ago.

MURILLO. He's too God-damn smart for his uniform! We're going to get that thirty out of him if we have to melt it out of his teeth!

PRISCILLA. They always say the same dumb things: "What a darling place! But really darling!" "I want to stay here all the rest of the time!"

GAGE. "By God, it's a gang! We walked into a trap!"

KILLARNEY. Don't I keep any part of this?

[*ALEGRE comes back around the house and goes in.*]

MURILLO. No. You watch me take in four hundred, and you think Christ has risen!

KILLARNEY. I merely asked.

MURILLO. I give you fair warning, girl, you ask too often, and I'm getting sick of you!

KILLARNEY. I merely asked.

MURILLO. Keep out of sight for a few minutes, just in case those New Jersey clucks come back.

[*They go out right, leaving MURILLO alone for a moment. He pulls out a wallet, folds in four hundred fresh dollars with the rest, and starts to go. ALEGRE enters with a tray to re-set the table.*]

You know, when I look at you I get all starry-eyed and impractical. For a thin dime, one-tenth of a dollar, I'd put on a pair of overalls and go in the fishing business with your father.—Did you hear what I said?

ALEGRE. Yes.

MURILLO. Well, do I get an answer? Did you take it in? You can't be as dumb as you are beautiful! That would be too good to be true.

ALEGRE. I understand very little of what you say, and what little I do understand I dislike.

MURILLO. I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll cut your old man in on the gambling take, an honest five per cent. You'll make more money than you ever saw in your life. We're doing well here and we want to stay. There's plenty in it for all of us.

ALEGRE. If we could have got rid of you legally you'd be gone now, but it seems the law protects you. It seems that we can do no more than say that you are unwelcome. You are unwelcome, and any percentage you might offer, large or small, would be quite unacceptable.

MURILLO. Listen, do you think, for God's sake, there's anything I want I can't have? I'm offering to pay because I'm a gentleman, but look at the situation, baby. Your old man's blind, and you haven't got so much as a gun in the house, and if you had one you couldn't use it. I can have this place, and I can pay what I like for it, and I can have you too any time you look good to me! What's more I probably will, so come down to earth and talk my language and maybe we can make a deal!

[*KING slips in from the left and stands listening.*]

ALEGRE. You're mistaken about the fire-arms. I have a revolver, and I have a rifle, and I handle them both very well.

MURILLO. Now you're talking. Now I have some respect for you.

ALEGRE. But I have none for you.

MURILLO. You will have, baby. You will have. It's the same with women as with nations, baby; the fellow with the most guns and the most money wins. Always. Because that's what the nations want! And what the women want!

ALEGRE (*turning on him*). Don't count on it too much.

MURILLO. Why not?

ALEGRE (*more gently*). I don't know what you've wanted—or what you want now—but whatever it is you'll never have it.

MURILLO. They all come round in time, girl, every one of them comes round in time.

ALEGRE. But not to you. Nothing will come to you.

MURILLO. If you mean you'll make a noise, lady, and people will come—and I'll be in trouble, don't rely on it. That's all different now. You go ahead and scream and if anybody hears you he'll turn over and say, "That's Murillo and his woman; why the hell can't he keep his women quiet?" And before long you won't mind; before long you'll be asking me to come home early nights. That's the way it goes with a man and his women.

[He follows his group out to the right. ALEGRE sets the table and comes back toward the left with the tray in her hand. She sees KING, and stops.]

KING. I beg your pardon.—I was just passing by. I won't trouble you. *(He goes out with a gesture of despair. She steps back from him, then goes toward the house.)*

ALEGRE. Father!

[D'ALCALA comes out to meet her.]

D'ALCALA. You called me?

ALEGRE. Here in broad sunlight, just a moment ago,
I saw someone from Spain!

D'ALCALA. He's here now?

ALEGRE. No,
he's gone now.

D'ALCALA. Who was it, Alegre?

ALEGRE. It was King.

King McCloud, the boy who went out with Victor,
or it may be I've begun to see his ghost—
but I thought I saw him—between me and the water.
My eyes still dazzle with it. And I heard his voice,
or thought I heard it.

D'ALCALA. There was definite word?

Wasn't King reported dead?

ALEGRE. Yes, with the others.

D'ALCALA. And you've never seen him?

ALEGRE. Only his picture. Never
his face till now. Never till now. Perhaps
not even now.

D'ALCALA. Why should you see a ghost
of this one lad that we never knew?

ALEGRE. The old reason.

The same old reason one has for seeing ghosts.
Because there was someone that I wanted to see,
and never could. When Victor went away
there was a little snapshot of King left lying
somewhere in his room. I picked it up,
and put it in a frame—and as years went by
and there was nothing to love among the faces
that passed along the Key—the picture and frame

became an altar where I could say a prayer
at night and morning—something to give a meaning
to a girl's day. He was the gayest, the proudest,
the one they all loved most, and who figured most
in all the letters. I'm punished for it now
wanting him too much—and seeing him
between me and the sky.

D'ALCALA. Whoever you saw,
it was no ghost.

ALEGRE. There was someone?

D'ALCALA. I heard him,
heard his step. The same step that went by
a little while before—it's a man who played
a round with the gamblers—and won money, and quit
and made them angry.

ALEGRE. But that couldn't be King.

D'ALCALA. I don't know.

But I know he's real, and no ghost.

ALEGRE. Would you leave me here—
just for a moment?

D'ALCALA. Yes.

*[He goes in. KING comes round the corner of the house again, and
pauses, looking at ALEGRE.]*

KING. You're Alegre d'Alcala?

ALEGRE. Yes. Is there no one with you? Have you come alone?

KING. I've come alone.

ALEGRE. Why is it only you?

KING. Out of those who went to Spain?

ALEGRE. Yes.

KING. Perhaps because I'm the only one alive.

ALEGRE. You're alive then?

[A pause.]

KING. My name's King McCloud. Your brother Victor
and I joined up with the Loyalists in April,
nineteen thirty-seven. He was killed, as you know.
I sent his letter to you.

ALEGRE. Yes. It came.

Unfinished, and the superscription written
in a strange hand.

KING. That was my writing.

ALEGRE. Yes.

KING. There were eight of us who went out together,
as you know, no doubt. I was the one survivor,
and I've taken it on myself to bring back reports
personally to the nearest of kin of each,

to say how it was they died. No one else could know—

[*A pause.*]

If it's not too close to you—or too far away—
or something you'd rather not hear.

ALEGRE. It's one of those hurts

one would rather have. Much rather. It's good of you
to come so far.

KING. I had my own reasons for that.

I feel myself responsible in part—
having led the boys to Spain. Having recruited.
And having escaped alive. It's for that reason
that I'm here now. Because it came to a choice,
to a question of illusion or disillusion,
and Victor and I were not of the same mind—
no, that's not it—

I came because there's little that's worth doing
in the world we live in now—and to say a last word
for certain gallant men who died gallantly
in an unselfish cause seems to make more sense
than merely to earn a living.

ALEGRE. Yes. I understand.

It's more than we hoped for.

KING. I've come here last. The others

were mostly from New England—and this seemed
a long way south, almost out of the world—
at least the world I've known. But it was Victor
whom I'd known best, and loved most, and felt surely
had been most loved at home.

ALEGRE. We did love him, and knew

that he'd know how to die well if it came
to dying. But to know just how and where
is something—almost as if you'd saved a trace
of life for him too. And that's a thing so precious
one can hardly give thanks.—My father will want to hear.
Shall I call him?

KING. There's something—it would be easier
if I spoke to you for a moment—

ALEGRE. Yes, surely.

KING. I've told

this all so often—and yet the oftener told
and the longer in between—the harder it is
to bring myself to begin. I can't help knowing
that it's a shock to see me. Wherever I go
(and I can't blame them, mind you)
they look at me and say, he's above the earth,
he walks about and breathes—and my boy's dead—

and might have been alive like him—no older—
not so old by a year or two, but dead—
underground and beginning the long cycle
of being dead forever. You thought of that
when you first saw me. You looked about for Victor,
and then looked back to me.

ALEGRE. No, for at first

I thought you were a ghost.

KING. I've learned this much—
that I'm not easily forgiven.

ALEGRE. Forgiven?

But it's not your fault—and couldn't have been your fault
that some came home and others stayed in Spain.

No one could hold it was.

Have the others been cruel, or silent? Or only silent?
For that would be cruel.

KING. The home I came to first

was in New England. I can see it now,
the elm, the honey-locust, and the sea,
the twelve-foot tide lapping up and down the piers
and I watching from the red diner across the common
afraid of the blind door.—Then, after that
I looked them all up, one by one, the homes
of all the boys that died there on Hill 4:
only each time it took longer to steel myself—
and I'd wear my shoes out pacing up and down
across from every house. Then suddenly I'd go in
and tell them. One by one I told them all,
how the boys came to die—and how I was alive—
and I can see now it was natural
they'd give me little thanks.

There in New England a man goes down with his ship
or he's not a man. And so at last, in the end,
it came down to Key Largo. That was the name
on Victor's letter. I had some reluctance
about deciding on so many miles,
on foot—and I hesitated. Then a month ago
I noticed there were buzzards overhead
along the road I took, and the pine was slashed
for turpentine, and I knew I was drifting south
to see you. Then I followed the buzzards down
and left the turpentine and followed the palms—
and watched the moss grow thick and the shacks grow thin
and came on down the keys.

ALEGRE. Do you mean you came

without quite knowing what roads you had taken
nor why you took them?

KING. Something like that.

ALEGRE. As if

some compulsion lay over you?

KING. Have I said so?

ALEGRE. No,

but, how have you lived?

KING. It's not so hard to get money
if you don't care how you get it.

ALEGRE. If this is a story

that harrows you to tell—or if you're weary
and would find it easier later—come in now
and be our guest—and let it all go till evening
or as long as you like. Victor wrote me about you
long ago, and nothing you can say
will alter your welcome.

KING. I'd better say it now.

It's fair to tell you there was an argument
that night before the last battle—and I held
that the war was lost, and everything was lost,
and it was better to abandon Spain
and save our lives. And it was true; we lost,
and the war's lost, and the others are all dead—
and they might be alive if they'd followed me—
yet Victor said I was wrong, and even now
he'd say I was wrong, and that's what tortures me—

ALEGRE. But why should you be tortured? When men differ
they must follow what they believe. Victor believed so
and would have said so.

KING. Yes, he said so then.

And over and over I say it to myself—
that I meant their good and mine—that I tried to save them—
could have saved them if they'd only followed
when I left the lines. And it's true. I was cool and sane
and chose to live. But some insanity
came over them there in the moonlight, and they chose
to stay and die. They chose it, and all I could say
meant nothing to them. Why should I feel a guilt
or be looked upon as guilty?

ALEGRE. You shouldn't.

KING. No,

and yet I do. Something within myself
accuses me. They accuse me. Without warrant,
without reason, day and night, incessantly,
till I look at a bed with horror, as a place

where a man can't sleep, and look at a road with horror
as something I must walk along forever
followed by the dead!—Will you forgive? All this—
this is just raving—

ALEGRE. If there was something said
or done that tortures you—

KING. Something done, perhaps.

ALEGRE. And if what you seek's forgiveness, then pass it over
in silence, and consider it forgiven.

Forget it utterly. It won't help to remember
some fatal awkwardness.

KING. But I have to say it
and say it honestly, and then wait to hear
a verdict from you.

ALEGRE. Shall I call my father?

KING. Not yet.—Yes, do call him. He must hear it now
or I go through it again.—I'll put it off
while there's excuse. But call him.

[D'ALCALA enters from the house.]

ALEGRE. This is my father.

This is King McCloud.

D'ALCALA. You're welcome, sir.

KING. You lost your eyes in Spain?

D'ALCALA. How did you know?

KING. Victor told me.

I shouldn't be here! I should be anywhere else
but here! I of all men! But I had to come!
I tried everything else—and everywhere else in the world
before I came here!

D'ALCALA. God knows you're welcome here.

KING. This was all pretense, this tale
of having come here out of sentiment
to let you know how Victor died! I came
to make my peace with myself, or you, or someone,
maybe with those who died—came here for penance
and expiation—as I went the rounds
in the north, in New England—driven by an evil
that must see the light or strangle me to death
working inside!

D'ALCALA. You'd rather I were not here?

KING. I'd rather you were. Only I find it hard
to meet men. You're the one I feared most to meet.
Victor's father. Sometimes I've found myself
on an empty street somewhere in a little town
perhaps on a Sunday morning. Then if a man

came walking toward me I'd cross over quickly
and turn my face away—study the windows
to keep his eyes from my face—and meet my own eyes
there in the glass—running away from him—

D'ALCALA. How can we help you?

KING. Maybe you'll find a way.

It was all right, you know, when I came from Spain,
when I first came. Eight of us had gone out
and one came back—and I was that one. All right,
but it wouldn't let me alone. I sent you the letter,
the one Victor wrote, and took a job and was fired,
for this thing was on my chest,
and I had to get it off—money or none—
shoes or none.—I've been going ever since
from one address to another, but no better,
worse if anything,—but not insane—
remember that, not shell-shocked, perfectly sound,
except for a little trembling in my hands!
But I can't stand men!

It seems that I'm allergic to the race
of men and their women! Damn them when they talk!
I hear them talking in the stores, I hear them
talking in comfort-stations; I walk three times
around a block, till the fellow that gives service
is giving his God damn service somewhere else,
and I don't have to hear him saying yes, sir,
this way, sir, and I don't have to see him smiling
his comfort-station smile.—Till I get desperate,
and I think, by God, they're all of them thin-skinned,
only they make an effort. And I barge in—
Give me a cup of coffee! How's tricks, pardner!
What a day! Hot damn, what a day! And they all come back—
Boy, oh, boy, what a day!—That's how it was
when I put my dollar down with the gamblers here—
I must do it somehow, must break in, must speak—
must learn again how my voice sounds—must practice a little
before I can speak to his sister.

ALEGRE. I'm afraid, too. Of men.

KING. No, not as I am.

[*A pause*]

When I left Victor
there on the hill with the others, I went through
an orange-grove and a pasture in the valley
and climbed the cliff beyond. Then I could see
the enemy playing star-shells over the ridge

where the boys were, getting ready to attack,
not even waiting for dawn. I couldn't stand it,
not to be in the fight, and I started back
again, to join them—but it was done like lightning—
before I was down the hill the Franco men
had lifted over the ridge and came rolling through
the valley in a sheet of steady flame,
ten thousand of them, so that our three or four hundred
never had a chance—anyway they were caught—
trapped there between the hills. When I came on them
it was still moonlight and the enemy
had gone straight on, leaving them lying there,
three or four hundred faces draining white,
under the moon. No prisoners and no wounded,
everything made certain and sure forever—
that's Franco's way. When I climbed up Hill 4
I found the boys there with a ring of dead
in front of their machine-gun, and the boys
dead too, lying in that dead white light
from the dead moon. I gave them what last rites
I could to keep them from the buzzards—then
it was morning, and I was a prisoner. What comes next
you won't believe, and I don't. But I fought
the rest of the war out with the Insurgents.

ALEGRE. Joined them?

[D'ALCALA *rises.*]

Joined the Insurgents?

KING. Just so they wouldn't kill me.

Something broke inside me. My nerve, maybe.

I was willing to eat dirt and be damned
if I could live. I ate dirt, and I'm damned.

I had to tell them I was one of them—
and then there was no way out. And now you know me.
I deserted, and left my friends to die alone—
and fought on Franco's side—and I'm alive—
and better men are dead.

That's why I'm here, why I've gone from door to door.

Not because I deserted, and left the lines
when the fighting was no use, for I was right
there on Hill 4—but once having saved my life
by slipping away, there never came a time
when I could say to myself, make a stand here,
this is too low—even to save your life
this is too low. So I went on and down
keeping myself alive, till the very maggots

cleansing the earth, took more pride in their work than I in mine—or in myself.

[*A young INDIAN in slacks and shirt comes softly round the corner of the house, listens for a moment, and comes forward.*]

ALEGRE. It's Osceola. One of the Indians.

OSCEOLA. Please,

my father says, whatever it is you wish,
we will do it. Only he asks you please
it can only be at night.

D'ALCALA. Do you know the second buoy,
the second glass buoy beyond the second weir
outside the beach?

OSCEOLA. Yes.

D'ALCALA. There's a body sunk
beside that second buoy. It's not my murder,
mind you, but I'd like to bring it home
to the man who did it. If you'll bring up that body
when the tide turns tonight,
and disengage the weight, and let it float
to the bar below, that's ten times over pay
for anything you've had. If it's too hard
and you can't do it, why then it was too hard
and forget I asked you. You understand?

OSCEOLA. Yes, surely.

D'ALCALA. Then don't be seen here. Every minute's a risk,
And that's the whole story.

[*OSCEOLA disappears silently.*]

[*To KING*]

And still

I don't know why you're here.

KING. Because my mind

says even now I was right, that I should live,
that one's better living on carrion, beast among beasts,
than dead in the earth's shell. But I have a demon
that won't hear any of this, that lives in my soul
and cries out day and night—that I should have died
before I gave the lie to what I was
there with the rebels! This demon tore me inside,
saying, very well, let them decide it
whose sons died on Hill 4! Tell your tale to them
and if one answers, yes, it was well done,
lift up your head and go on. But they said nothing,
and the demon drove me here.

D'ALCALA. I have my own demon.

There was some kind of hell took fire in me
when I was young in Spain, that sent me out

to fight against the tyrants of that day
in that sad country—to give my wealth and youth
and then my eyes, and then my son, to trap
the rats that ate my country to the bone—
yet now my country's dying, and the rats
feed on the carcass.—And you've come from there—
from where I left my eyesight and lost my one son—
and you fought there against us—accepted life
and took money and took food, and slept beside them!—
God knows in what blood your feet have walked, God knows
who's dead by your hand!—and I struggle to hold out
my hand to you, but the demon of my youth
says, no, he's your enemy by blood, let him die
and go, before you touch him. As for Spain,
the Moors held Spain eight hundred years one time,
and thought it was permanent, but we took it from them,
as we'll take it back again!

KING. I knew you must say it.

D'ALCALA. Whether a man should live when his own demon
cries out in the night, and drives him across the hills,
and his bed becomes a torture, and he fears
men's eyes, I can't tell you that—if he still finds it
palatable to live, then I can't answer!

KING. I hadn't hoped
to have your friendship. But I'm desperate, too,
and I won't go yet. I had another hope—
that I've never admitted, even to myself,
but all the way down through the south, these months,
I've been remembering what Victor said
in a long night in Spain—about his sister:
that there was no one else in all the world
to whom a man could go with a man's crime
and say, I did this, and get understanding
for the lowest he could do. Get even forgiveness
for what a man does, and never dares tell. He said
that she was named Alegre for the town
in Spain where she was born. And you're Alegre?

ALEGRE. Yes.

KING. Here's something else to forgive me then.

Out of a desperate loneliness and fear—
out of an outcast's life, with no God to pray to—
and never having seen your face—I've dared to love you—
have even imagined you from knowing Victor—
and find you as I knew you'd be. Never saying,
never admitting it even to myself,
I've put what little hope was left on you

and kept on south toward you. Now you owe me nothing except a parting curse, and I ask for nothing, but I have said it at last, and said it to you.

If I said more I'd go beyond all begging.—

ALEGRE. Why must you tell me?

About this betrayal—and then about—this love?

Why should you tell me, and make me live through it, too?

How could a woman love you?

We're all less for it, the whole world's less because of what you are! A woman can hesitate forever—but a man must be something sometime bright and clear, like a plowshare in the sun or a mountain above the cloud!

KING. Well, look, out there

the dusty roads go trailing away in the sun,
and fork out east and west—that's where I live—
on those interminable branching highways
that reach on out into nothing.

ALEGRE. Don't go yet.

KING. I'll take—

any kindness—yes, any usefulness—just to be wanted—
a shadow of the welcome that you gave
when I first came.

D'ALCALA. Stay if you will. If you stay
it's safer for my daughter.

We're alone here and beset. (*He goes in.*)

KING. Then I am wanted.

Yes, the gamblers. Even that's better than nothing.
I came to be forgiven, to be shriven,
and maybe to be cured. I can't have that—
and yet some kind of easiness to the heart
comes over me with this. I can face them now,
as I couldn't before. Having told my story
and let the winds blow through me.

ALEGRE. Will you come in?—

And we'll try to forget that any of this has happened.

You're tired, and you should rest. It's all too easy to lengthen out misery

KING. You have your own misery?

ALEGRE. Yes. I have my own.

KING. If it's only love it's something you get over—
not like mine.

ALEGRE. One can get over love—

oh, any kind, except for someone dead—
that doesn't end.

KING. For someone dead in Spain?

ALEGRE. For a boy who went to Spain and won't come back.

One of the leaders. With a beauty on his face
that comes to a man with being more a man
than other men.

KING. What was his name?

ALEGRE. Never mind. Why are you shivering?

KING. Oh, just the cold wind from between the worlds,
the inter-stellar wind. (*He rises.*)
And human footsteps.
The smell of the human race.

[MURILLO comes back with his group, ready to go to work again.]

Forgive me—I'm—

I've got to get out of here.

MURILLO. The travel's light

this morning, and what little there is of it's running
on ten cent gas. Keep an eye on the road
and don't slip up again. Wait a minute, big gambler,
I want to talk to you.

[KING has tried blindly to go out through the palm lattice and missed
the exit. Finding himself caught he turns.]

KING. What about?

MURILLO. I'd like to have my thirty dollars, gambler.

You walked off with thirty-one, but one was yours
in the first place, so you can keep it. A neat trick
that was, dipping in and out of a come-on game,
only I want my money.

KING. You don't get it.

MURILLO. Whatever's mine I get.

KING. I heard you say,

if you don't want to gamble keep out of gambling games—
that goes for you!

MURILLO. Who the hell are you?

KING. A soldier.

I came out of Europe in a bad year—
say 1939—and I'm engaged
like all men alive, in hunting for my grave.
No doubt I'll find it, along with a bag of gold,
at the foot of a rainbow—or right here where I'm standing,
by the way you look at me. Only I carry a gun
and it's loose in the holster.

MURILLO. Why did you raid my game
and walk off with the sucker money?

KING. I needed it—

and you didn't need it—and it was easy to get—
and so I took it.

MURILLO. Look, I've been in this business

fifteen years, and nobody ever yet
got away from me with sucker money.

KING. No?

Then this is new for you.

[MURILLO puts a hand to his pocket. KING lays a hand on the butt
of his revolver.]

I know your kind.

I've watched a dozen like you, up and down
the fairs and carnivals—sneaking into town
and sneaking out—setting up three-card monte
and disappearing like a bad smell when they try
to get their fingers on you—always just three jumps
ahead of the police—always an eye on the exit—
a species of gangster rabbit! Don't threaten me
with that hand on your pocket. You know your shifty game
too well to make a noise!

MURILLO. Well, it just happens

you've got me wrong. I know the kind you mean,
but personally I've used a gun before
and I'll maybe use it again, because it gets
to be a kind of thirst, and maybe a soldier
knows what that means. I want my money back
and I'm going to get it.

[He reaches slowly into his pocket and takes out an automatic. KING ex-
tracts his revolver at the same time.]

Look, bo, that was your chance
to shoot, and you didn't do it. In my game
you learn that there are just two kinds of men,
those who are not afraid to die, and those
who are. A man who's not afraid to die,
he's dangerous. The others you can handle.
You have to learn to pick 'em out in a crowd
and pick 'em fast—and you can't make mistakes—
so I don't make any—

KING. Maybe your world

is over-simplified. I think you'll find
there are more than two kinds of men. Just for example,
some can think, some have nerve reactions
beyond the solar plexus.

MURILLO. I'm warning you.

This is trained on your belly, see; if you
kill me, you die. I'm not afraid to die,
and you are. You're all afraid, all your lives,
afraid of gods and churches and the law—
but if a man gets up who's afraid of nothing,
and he'll kill you as soon as look at you, and spit in your face

after it's over—because there aren't any ghosts to follow a man—well, men do what he tells them—they do what I tell them. And so will you all. I know. I've watched it plenty often.

KING. You poor, darkened, ophidian mind, what kind of triumph is there for you or me in killing each other here for a poker bluff with spectators looking on? Is there no other way you can make yourself believe that you're alive except by holding a gun on a fellow's entrails and daring him to shoot? You're a fool, Murillo. If you rated beyond a ten-year-old I. Q. you'd have other satisfactions. Look at Hunk. You'd better watch your jumpy gun-man.

MURILLO (*to HUNK*). Drop it!

[HUNK *lowers his gun.*]

You're playing for time, no doubt. You think, later on, when he isn't looking, I'll get him. You'll call the police, you think. Well, times have changed in the matter of police and what they can do for you. The whole damn world's quite different from what it was. Here on Key Largo I say what's what. Call the police and tell them and hear what they say about it. Maybe you haven't noticed, but the bars are down and the water's over the sea-wall nowadays. You can have what you can pay for or what you can take. And no questions asked. Anyway, not here, not now. Remember that's a delicate trigger on those army models, so let go easy. Give me the gun.

[KING *lets go.*]

And now
give me the money.

[KING *hands the money over.*]

KING. What do you think you gain by that? (*He sits.*)

MURILLO. Thirty dollars. And take back your gun. I don't want it.

Right at this moment you haven't got a thing

I can't take from you. (*He lays a hand on ALEGRE's shoulder.*)

There's a champion!

There's a hero! I've paid up my protection
another two weeks. And there's two weeks' more rent.

We're staying on. (*He turns away, tossing ALEGRE two ten dollar bills.*)

CORKY. There's a party of monkeys walking in. Two men and
two women, Packard sedan. Flash tourists.

MURILLO. Get ready.

[*The gang gathers round the wheel.*]

You too, third rail. Get in the game. Yes, I mean you. I'm about to lose a couple of stooges and I need an under study. Get in there and look interested.

[KING obeys orders. MURILLO spins the wheel. Two couples enter.]

1ST WOMAN. What a darling place! But really darling!

MURILLO. The house loses, ladies and gentlemen. Loses heavily but we're still game. Eighty dollars to this lady. Eighty dollars to the two gentlemen. (*He pays off in bills.*)

2ND WOMAN. Harry! An outdoor casino! Where's my purse? I left my purse in the car!

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE: *The interior of the house on the wharf, late the same evening. There is a couch to the left—a door to the rear of it. A desk and a large wooden chair are set under a window along the rear wall. There are several chairs to the right, and a downstage entrance. A small dining table stands near the center of the room. The walls are weathered board, decorated with sharks' teeth, shells, and a blue, bright painting of the house and the bay as seen in the first act.*

KING is lying on the couch, his face to the wall. D'ALCALA and ALEGRE sit talking quietly. She is looking at the harbor out of the rear window. Both doors stand open.

ALEGRE. What do you hear?

D'ALCALA. The breathing of our guest—

a man sleeping lightly.—His face is toward the wall by the way the sound comes to me.

ALEGRE. Yes.—

D'ALCALA. The tide's

three-quarters out, by the clanking of the chain where the boat's tethered. Murillo and the others are holding some kind of conference in his room; one of the women's crying. Out on the gulf there's a government cutter heading in this way—no, it may be a fisherman; but a Chrysler engine, too new for a fisherman. A mother porpoise blew at the wharf a moment ago, and the calf came up after her. The eyes can look only one way at a time, but the ears reach out in every direction. It makes for a full world.

Do you love him still?

ALEGRE. Yes. He must never know it.

D'ALCALA. When you love, is it better the man should die
and keep his faith, or lose his faith and live?

ALEGRE. I can't answer that.

D'ALCALA. Can you wish him dead—
only nobly dead?

ALEGRE. Oh, why do you ask me?

D'ALCALA. Because I don't know. I've thought so long about it
that I don't know. Because I lost my eyes
fighting against Rivera in our Spain,
and now Rivera's dead, and I'm alive,
only another and a worse dictator
rules in Spain—and Victor's bed stands empty,
and we've lost and we're here alone.

[ALEGRE rises suddenly.]

What did you see?

ALEGRE. A man went past this window.

D'ALCALA. You're sure it was a man?

ALEGRE. Yes, but bent over—

bent completely double—and without a sound.

I can't believe now I saw him.

D'ALCALA. Don't be frightened.

He'll appear in a moment in the doorway—
this one, behind me—and no doubt he's wearing
Victor's old slacks. It's the two Seminoles
that you befriended.

ALEGRE. How can you know?

D'ALCALA. An Indian

walks that way. Nobody else. Come in.

[JOHN HORN appears in the doorway to the left, his son OSCEOLA behind
him.]

HORN. We're sorry to disturb you.

D'ALCALA. Come in if you wish.

HORN. We'll stand here out of the light. It's not good manners
to say your thank-you and ask another favor
all in one breath.—We're thankful for the clothes
and they saved our lives, but we must get off Key Largo
or our lives aren't worth much. There's an old boat in the inlet
beyond the beach, and it's probably yours. We've caulked it
with Spanish moss, and we think it may hold water
as far as the Everglades.

D'ALCALA. It's yours, man. Take it.

We'd forgotten it was there.

ALEGRE. But you have no oars.

HORN. Now there it is again. If we had a knife
we'd soon have oars. I hope that's the end of begging.

ALEGRE (*bringing one*).

There was one here—these are all unused things,
and better you should have them.

HORN. Before we go

we floated the body, and it went down the tide
two hours ago. It would have missed the bar,
but we swam after it and shoved it up
by hand where the flashing light shows off the reef.
It will be seen by the fishermen.

D'ALCALA. It's my turn

to wonder how I'll thank you. This may save us.

Is there anything else?

HORN. Nothing. We'll have to start.

The night's not long enough. (*He turns to go.*)

ALEGRE. There's a boat with a flashlight

playing on the house. Had you better wait
till it's gone by? Sit down.

HORN. Thank you. We'll wait. (*He sits.*)

D'ALCALA. Some stranger's rowing west along the Key.

It's not a stroke I know. Whoever it is
he's not coming here.

HORN. Out in Oklahoma

there are ten thousand Seminoles cooped up
on a reservation. It was Andrew Jackson
moved them there—those he could get his hands on.
I was born there; I taught there twenty years
in the Indian schools—till my wife died and my boy
was a man grown. But all my life I've wanted
to join the poisonous remnant of our tribe
in the Everglades that Jackson couldn't catch
and had to leave here. The Oklahoma Indians
sit and look at the reservation fence
and take their hand-outs from the government
and die out like the buffalo. Good riddance
of an obsolete animal. There are too many men
even when they're white, and an Indian's just too much;
feed him, God damn him, and let him die! We left
to find our brothers here in the Everglades,
and shake the Indian Office. All my life long
I've taken charity, and seen my race
take charity from a race it hates, a race
that hates it. I named my boy Osceola
because Osceola struck back in his way,
the only way he knew, and couldn't be conquered,
and left his sons here in the Florida swamps
unconquered. They live badly here, no doubt

but they live as they please.

Tell them, Osceola, what is it to be an Indian?

OSCEOLA. It's to be a dead man erect among the living.

It's to be a ghost bred in a tribe of ghosts
that haunts its murderers. It's to be a symbol
of all lost causes—and how soon they're forgotten. It's
to be what I am.

D'ALCALA. But why were you on the roads?

What do they have against you?

HORN. We were out of money;

they picked us up as Negro vagrants and sent us
to work in the gang.

ALEGRE. Do you know the Everglades?

Is there anyone there you know?

HORN. No, but we'll live.

We'll live on what there is.

D'ALCALA. The conference

seems to have broken up, and some of the gamblers
are on their way here.

HORN (*rising and going to the left door*).

We start tonight.—Good night.

I won't try to thank you.

D'ALCALA. We're even with thanks. Good night.

ALEGRE. Good night.

KING (*in his sleep*).

The Everglades. (*He wakes and turns.*)

Yes, now I know who I am.

D'ALCALA. Were you dreaming, sir?

KING. Yes. There's the rat-tail end of a long dream
just slipping over the lip—into that grand canyon—
where we lose what we don't remember.—

I dreamed there was an Indian
running away to the poisonous Everglades
so he could be free there—and then in my dream I knew
this Indian was myself.—And when you think of it
the Everglades are exactly what a man wants;
if ever there was a refuge where they can't find you,
and there's always something to eat, and it never freezes,
and the wild white birds nest silently, unobserved
ten thousand years—it's the Everglades—that's the end
of dreaming. That's our home.

D'ALCALA. Only it happens

there was an Indian here who was escaping
into the Everglades.

KING. And it wasn't a dream? But then when the dream went on
I think Alegre was the Everglades,

silent, with white nesting birds, and I'd come south to find her. But the oars were gone and the only knife was one that once was Victor's and cut me off from her.

[*There is a knock at the right-hand door.*]

D'ALCALA. Come in.

[CORKY and GAGE and HUNK enter.]

Sit down.

[*They sit.*]

KING. This is a delegation. The three rats.

HUNK. Oh yeah?

KING. Excuse me.

I've lost my right to insult his underlings, now that I've been insulted by the satrap, and I've taken money from him, and done his work. No, I'm referring to the human race in general. As rats. Remembering the research fellow in the laboratory who tested the rat-brain. You remember him? He put a rat in a cage with little doors that didn't go anywhere—except for one that had a circle on it. Behind that one there was food—and so the rat learned if he jumped at this one door with the circle he could eat—no other door would do—and he jumped at that without a mistake for a year, and ate, by God, and then the experimenter fixed that door so it wouldn't open. The rat jumped and banged his head till he was bloody around the top, and sick; and when there was never anything to eat, and the circle was always wrong, he lost his mind, his poor rat-mind, because it was just beyond him—the circle should be right—always had been right, and there should be something to eat, and it wasn't there—so he went mad. All up and down the room white rats in cages, butting the wrong doors and bleeding at the ears, and going mad because the problem set baffled the small rat-brain. They ran in circles and bit themselves, and were quiet. After that they just lay there; men did what they pleased with them—they'd had enough.

HUNK. We came about the new rules.

ALEGRE. What rules?

HUNK. The rules here from now on.

He's got 'em down there. Corky's got 'em.

CORKY. Nobody's to leave the place without permission.

ALEGRE. Tonight?

CORKY. From now on. And after sunset

nobody's to leave the house without permission.

ALEGRE. Permission from whom?

CORKY. The boss. Murillo.

KING. Curfew.

CORKY. That's what it amounts to. Curfew.

KING. Why, yes, curfew—

and concentration. Let's look at this a moment;

maybe these rules aren't feasible. Suppose

the commissary wanted to send out

to get supplies?

CORKY. You make a list. We'll do

the buying, and all that.

ALEGRE. I'm to make a list?

CORKY. Yes. And we do the buying. You stay here.

HUNK. And one more thing.

CORKY. Yes—one more thing. The boss

likes the accommodations in the house.

He'll sleep and eat in the house, and the stranger here

he'll sleep in the cabin.

KING. You'll run out of doors, you know.

Those with a limited intelligence

never see more than two or three doors, and those

shut up on them young. You've jumped at the one with the girl,

and that's a little stale now, that's no answer,

and now you're jumping at the dollar sign,

and easy money sign; you live by that;

but when the author of the experiment

nails that door up, and you jump and break your head,

and then you jump again with blood in your eyes

and end up breaking rock—then all doors are shut,

then they're made of steel and it's no use jumping—

then they bring you your beans—and you're a little sick,

and nothing matters.

GAGE. What are you trying to do?

Trying to make us jittery, the way you are?

KING. That's the idea.

HUNK. Go tell your own beads. There's nothing biting us.

We're working perfectly legal and straightforward.

Go back and serve your time if you've been tagged

and get it over.

KING. It must be obvious

if two hundred pounds of Irish beef can look

and put his finger on it—or his foot.

Look—about those rats—size doesn't count—understand?
Big and little, it gets them.

HUNK. We'll see about that;
you and me, we'll see if size counts. So that's all.
We're going.

[*The three rise.*]

D'ALCALA. Will you take back a word from me
for the man you call Murillo?

HUNK. That's his name.

D'ALCALA. It's also what you call him.

HUNK. There's no need
for any word back.

D'ALCALA. But tell him if you will
that his conditions are acceptable
and we make no objection—except to the last.
The stranger, as you call him, will continue
to eat and sleep in the house. The man Murillo
will remain where he is.

HUNK. You tell him that. Not me.

What he says goes.

D'ALCALA. But take the message.

HUNK. Hell,

I can tell him what you said, but take it from me,
he does what he wants.

D'ALCALA. I leave you that illusion.

And he may keep it, too. Good night.

[*The three go out silently.*]

KING. What must I do now?

D'ALCALA. Sleep in your bed,
because it's yours.

KING. But you see what you've done?

D'ALCALA. It was done deliberately.

KING. You accept the conditions
only that I'm to eat where he wants to eat
and sleep where he wants to sleep.

D'ALCALA. He won't sleep here.

KING. Don't think I won't stand up and do what I can
against him! He wants Alegre, and my blood can burn
like yours when he looks at her—burns in me now
and I can feel it.—But, God, how can I explain?
If it came to dying I don't trust my brain,
my busy, treacherous, casuistic brain,
presenting me with scientific facts
and cunning reasons. It's separate from myself,
separate from my will—a traitor brain,
an acid eating away at all the faiths

by which we live, questioning all the rules,
and leaving us bare—naked white animals
without poetry or God.

ALEGRE. But say these things.

KING. I lived with the worms so long
and ran away so often, that my mind's trained
to find excuses, like a poacher's ferret
finding himself a warren underground
and running wild among the rabbit-holes,
sleeping among the bodies, and forgetting
the master above ground.

D'ALCALA. If we ask too much
it's possible a man could slip away
to the west of the house, in the shadow.

KING. I couldn't do that,
and wouldn't try. But could we all go together
or are we watched?

D'ALCALA. We're watched quite carefully.

KING. If you stay here
then I must stay.

D'ALCALA. Then it won't come to dying.
If we can only hold him off tonight
someone will find the evidence on the point
and Murillo will move on. Perhaps even this evening.
The mullet fishermen are out at night
this time of year.

[*A pause.*]

ALEGRE. What does your mind
think traitorously underneath sometimes to betray you
when you're in danger?

KING. I can't tell you that.

ALEGRE. Does it begin by saying that we live—
all of us—on illusions? That we live
and lay our lives down for things unsubstantial
as a sunrise or a rainbow?

KING. That's how it begins.

ALEGRE. Then I have it too. It's not peculiar
to soldiers out of Spain, or even to men
who've left a line against orders. It's all of us
in this age of dying fires.

KING. Do you wish to live
by truth or by illusion?

ALEGRE. By the truth.

Always by the truth.

KING. But that's an illusion.

Because by the truth no man can live at all,

even a day. We die when we look at truth.
And one by one the illusions
wear themselves out.

[MURILLO *appears in the entrance at the right.*]

MURILLO. I just came to say
Killarney's leaving tomorrow, sheering off,
and Corky, too. So now it's permanent
about you both.

[*To KING*]

And so you work tomorrow.

KING. All right.

MURILLO. Also it seems that you want to hear it from me
that I'm moving in here tonight, and you're moving out,
sort of synchronized. If there's any objection
I want to have it now.

[*He goes to KING.*]

Do you object?

Are you too good for the cabins?

KING. No, sir.

MURILLO. No, sir?

Hell, do you think you're back in the army, hombre?
All right, you don't object. Then when do I move,
because I go early to bed?

KING. Listen, I'm not
supposed to be here. I'm supposed to be dead,
and I have reasons for travelling under a name
that's not my own. But I'm Alegre's brother.
My name's Victor, and I'm back from Spain.
The only extra bed in this house is mine,
and you can see I'll need it for myself—
and I can't let you in here with my sister,
not without trouble. You didn't know this, of course—
nobody knew it, and I don't hold it against you,
but a man's sister's his sister. He has a right
to say hands off.

MURILLO. I didn't know that. Now,
if it's as you say, and your name's Victor and she's
your sister, hell, I know how it is; I know,
because I had sisters of my own; nice girls,
went to school, got married, asking for money
sometimes when you see them, but not much,
respectable girls. (*Sharply to KING*)

Where were you born?

KING. In Alegre,
Spain.

MURILLO. That's your sister's name?

KING. Alegre, yes.

MURILLO. When did you come to this country?

KING. In twenty-four.

MURILLO. Where are your passports?

KING. We have none. We came in
through Cuba and South America.

MURILLO (*to ALEGRE*).

He's your brother?

ALEGRE. Yes.

MURILLO (*his hand on D'ALCALA's shoulder*).

What's this young man's name?

D'ALCALA. Victor.

MURILLO. He's your son?

D'ALCALA. Yes.

MURILLO. What's the color of his hair?

D'ALCALA. Black.

MURILLO. How tall is he?

D'ALCALA. Five-ten.

MURILLO. There's a scar on his face.

Where is it?

D'ALCALA. He had no scar when he went away.

MURILLO. What's the color of his eyes?

[D'ALCALA *hesitates*.]

You should have told him that

before you lied to me. You're no more Victor
than I am.

[SHERIFF GASH *comes to the right-hand door*.]

GASH. Murillo—come out a minute.

MURILLO. What for?

GASH. I said come out a minute!

MURILLO. Damn it, give orders

where you're owed money! Let me finish this
and then I'll see you!

GASH. I can talk from here.

Would you maybe want to know what we found, Murillo,
washed up below on the bar with a gag in his mouth
and tied with wire?

MURILLO. What?

GASH. That road gang boss.

Dead about twenty-four hours. It seems he was tangled
with a cray-fish line.

MURILLO. Who?

GASH. That boss of the road gang

that disappeared yesterday. You may know the fellow.

I heard some talk he'd been seen gambling here—

yesterday sometime. And there was some kind of quarrel over the game and a woman.

MURILLO. Not to my knowledge.

I can't keep track who gambles.

GASH. Well, all I say, I wish whoever did it had sunk him deep enough so he wouldn't come floating around to cause a stink.

We've got a body, and it was certainly murder, and when a fellow's working for the state and drawing checks you can be God damn sure he's got connections somewhere. He'll be missed, and there'll be an investigation. It'll come to me—I've had to swear in extra deputies already—and, Jesus, there was enough to explain, without explaining murder.

MURILLO. Don't look at me, for Christ's sake! It's not my murder!

GASH. Who said it was?

I said I wished to God whoever did it had sunk him deep enough so he wouldn't wash up in my territory! (*He goes to the door and calls in a DEPUTY.*) Hey, Sam, take these three out, and hold them on the porch. They're all of 'em suspects. I'm questioning Murillo.

[*To D'ALCALA*]

If you don't mind, we'll use this room.

[*To the DEPUTY*]

Shut the door.

[*The door is closed and GASH and MURILLO face each other.*]

MURILLO. You're serious.

GASH. You're God damn right I'm serious.

MURILLO. But what about?

You're not accusing me?

GASH. It's not my business to accuse anybody, mind you. But I'm supposed to make arrests of suspicious characters found near the scene of a crime!

MURILLO. Good God! I hope I'm not a suspicious character.

GASH. Get me right,

Mr. Murillo, what I think about you or anybody here, won't matter a damn—but if other people think you should be arrested and I didn't arrest you, then I begin to worry about my job! You have to hold the votes

to get re-elected sheriff, and most of the time
you can just play along, and it's easy, but when it's murder
you've got to watch your step, for they're watching you.

They're watching me now. Watching both of us.

MURILLO. I shouldn't be here.

GASH. No.

You should have left. When anything suspicious
happens, you should trek it. Innocent or guilty.
For your own protection—and mine. And the trouble is
this stink's bigger than you are, and bigger than I am,
and you're right here in my hands, and the deputies
want to know who you are.

MURILLO. I'm getting out.

GASH. You can't.

Not now. But why the hell you aren't in Georgia
or Alabama gripes me. You could have been,
easy, by now.

MURILLO. I had something particular here.

GASH. She must have been pretty. They hang in this state, you know.
They don't burn or smother.

MURILLO. Are you holding me up
for money?

GASH. Son, if I take my hand away
and you start running, you'll never get off this Key,
you won't get fifty yards! I wish to God
I could get you out of this, and into Cuba,
because you're around my neck! And you'll cross me up
if you ever get in the dock.

MURILLO. I wouldn't say that.

GASH. Well, I would.

MURILLO. Then, for Christ's sake, use your head,
and pin this on somebody.

GASH. Meaning who?

MURILLO. Has it slipped your mind already about those niggers
you were hunting before breakfast? Where were they running
and who were they running from?

GASH. From his own gang.

From the fellow that was killed.

MURILLO. Then, you stupid ass,
they killed him, and ran.

GASH. It does no good whatever
to pin suspicion on two runaways
that we can't find. To get you out of it
I've got to arrest somebody. Find those niggers,
and that's all I want. They murdered him in escaping,

and I'll say it's perfect. But I couldn't find them this morning, and I can't find them now!

MURILLO. They were here this evening.

GASH. They were? When?

MURILLO. Not half an hour ago.

Here, near the turn.

GASH. Now, look, boy, it all hangs on this—if it's accurate.

MURILLO. Hell, Corky saw them!

They came to the house.

GASH. Came in?

MURILLO. Came in and stayed
say half an hour.

GASH. By God, that gives us something! (*He goes to the door.*)
Before I call them, who's this boy?

MURILLO. He says

he's the old man's son, says his name's Victor, says
he's the girl's brother. Poppycock—that's all
to get me out of the house.

GASH. Let him say it, though.

Let him say he's Victor. (*He opens the door.*)

Come in. Let them all come in.

And shut the door again.

[ALEGRE, D'ALCALA and KING enter.]

There were two Negroes
here this evening. What have you done with them?
Where are they now?

D'ALCALA. There were two Indians here,
no Negroes.

GASH. Just as you like. We'll call them Indians.

Where are they now?

D'ALCALA. What do you want with them?

GASH. Just murder, that's all.

ALEGRE. They escaped three days ago
and the murder occurred last night. It's impossible
to connect them with it. Once they were free and away
why would they kill a guard?

GASH. Why did they come back?

What were they doing here? And just how much
do you know about it, sister? You said this morning
you hadn't seen them.

ALEGRE. This is this evening.

GASH. Yes,

But I don't trust you. And there's one among you
who was cited before on a charge like this.

Your brother Victor. Aiding a getaway.

Is your name Victor?

KING. Yes.

MURILLO. He said it was Victor

not ten minutes ago. He'd better keep it.

It's a good name.

GASH (*to D'ALCALA*).

I'll remember that, too.

Now I begin to see a little daylight.

Now I begin to think we'll get somewhere.

The Indians did the killing to get away

and Victor helped them—on that theory

he's an accessory, and can be arrested,

so that's one in the bag!

D'ALCALA. He came back from Spain

only this morning; the murder took place last night,

when he wasn't here.

GASH. And you told me just this morning

that he was dead. So where and when he came

and what he was doing when the murder happened,

whenever it was, and I don't know yet when,

that's all to be explained.

D'ALCALA. Then I'll explain it.

You have no need for suspects, because I know

the murderer and what happened. The gambler, Murillo,

who sits there, in that corner, even now,

because I hear him breathe,—this man Murillo

(by God, I should have learned to shoot by ear)

surprised the road gang boss and the girl who's called

Killarney, and struck him over the head, and tied him

with wire from our clothes-line. This was near the wharf-end

at two o'clock. He made Killarney help him

and they dragged the body to the rowboat, towed it

some fifty yards or so out into the gulf,

weighted it with pockets full of stones,

or so I judge, and let it sink.

MURILLO. God damn you,

who told you that?

D'ALCALA. Told me? I knew so well

where you had sunk that body that today

at my direction it was fished to the surface,

and freed of weights and floated to the bar

where it was found to use against you!

MURILLO. Damn you,

I say who told you this? For he can't see!

He's blind as dirt!

GASH. He's drawing you out, you lunk,
and you fall in the trap! Where did you get this story?
Can you substantiate it?

D'ALCALA. I hear better
than most men see.

GASH. You mean you heard all that,
and nobody told you?

D'ALCALA. Heard it, just as I said,
and know what happened.

GASH. That's not evidence.

That could be manufactured by the yard
and no check on it. No court in Florida
would take a blind man's word for a thing like that,
and no court should, unless there's corroboration,
and there isn't any.

ALEGRE. But we know who's guilty.

GASH. Do you, lady? That's to prove in court,
according to court rules. I'd like to hear more
of this story of yours. Who fished the body up
and set it afloat? You said you told them where
and how to find it. Who were they?

D'ALCALA. I can't tell you.

GASH. You don't know who they were?

D'ALCALA. Yes. I can't tell you.

GASH. But I think I know. There were two Indians here
according to what I hear. They fished him up
and set him afloat.

D'ALCALA. Yes.

GASH. Could they have reason
for wanting to involve Murillo here,
or do you have some reason?

D'ALCALA. Sir, I have some!

I wanted to send his murder home to him
because he's fixed himself here on my house
like a cancer on the heart!

GASH. That's a possible version.

But I tell you what it'll sound like to a jury:
It'll sound as if two convicts killed a foreman
to get away—and then got scared, and towed
the body down to the doorstep of a man
who'd had a quarrel with that foreman, and as if your son
was in on it somehow, because you knew exactly
where the body was sunk, and because the boy
was mixed up in a very similar business
some years ago. That sounds to me like sense.
How does it sound to you?

D'ALCALA. Like the lie it is,
and you know it is.

GASH. That's how it all adds up
for any jury, I tell you. And the truth in court
is what sounds like the truth in court, and not what happened,
not necessarily.

Give me your gun. (*He takes KING's revolver.*)

ALEGRE. But he's not Victor, and he didn't help them,
and they didn't kill the guard!

GASH. He said he was Victor.

And the rest they can argue.

ALEGRE. But look what you're doing!

Doesn't it matter who's guilty?

GASH. That comes into it. As a matter of fact
I'd much rather have the Indians than your brother,
and you know where the Indians are. So think it over,
maybe we can make a deal. (*He opens the door.*)

Come in here, Sam.

[SAM enters.]

The boy's under arrest. I'm searching the house.

Just keep an eye on this room. (*He goes out left with a flashlight.*)

MURILLO (*after a pause*).

God, it's hot in here.

If I didn't know that you were guilty, I'd know
by looking at you—it shows in the way you sit,
and the way you speak, and the way you turn your head!

[GASH re-enters carrying a rifle and a revolver in one hand, a small box
and a photograph in the other. He lays the articles on the table.]

GASH. By God, a snake
couldn't hide in this bungalow. There's nothing here
to crawl behind. What's this?

ALEGRE. Letters.

GASH. And here's a picture of this bird that said his name
was Victor, or wasn't Victor, I forget
which he said last. Maybe he is your brother;
either that or you've known him a damn long time,
because there's a date here on the picture—May,
1936. Whose guns are these?

ALEGRE. Mine.

GASH. We'll give them back when the trouble's over.

Listen, Sam, tell Mac to get organized
on board the cutter. We'll have to search the beach
and do a little scouting along the coast.

I'm looking for two Indians.

[SAM goes out, closing the door.]

Now here's my proposition. Give me the Indians

and I'll let Victor off. You'll find my word's as good as an honest man's, and it's a good bargain—better than you'll get in court. I keep my word because if I didn't I couldn't stay in business, but once you get in a District Attorney's office hell can't save you.—So tell me where they are and I'll do without your brother.

ALEGRE. They'd be hanged.

GASH. I wouldn't be surprised.

ALEGRE. Then why do you protect one man, whom I won't name, who might be tried, but evidently won't be?

GASH. Lady, I told you.

I keep my word. If I keep my word to you I have to keep it elsewhere.

ALEGRE. And you dare admit that?

GASH. Ma'am,

if I was to deny it people would laugh. That's just politics and government. I've been in politics here all my life, and I don't like it myself, and I didn't invent it, but what you have to do is sell protection to people that can pay, and then protect them the best you can.

ALEGRE. Even from murder?

GASH. No,

not from murder. But if it comes down to murder you give them what breaks you can.

ALEGRE. You could be honest.

You know that?

GASH. No, lady, I couldn't. It's been tried; you have to have a machine to stay in office, and nothing runs a machine but money. Now I've never been off the keys, but I've heard it said there's honest government elsewhere, here and there, by fits and starts. Maybe there is. I don't know. I don't see how it could last. It might come in, but it wouldn't be natural. There's a John Chinaman runs the laundry down at Star Key. He says in China the same word that means to govern means to eat. They've worked it out in China. The government eats you, but it protects you first, because if it didn't you wouldn't get fat enough to make good eating.

ALEGRE. But if they knew about you—!

GASH. Lady, they know, and nothing you could say

would mean a thing.—For your own good, and his, and his—I tell you, give me a line on those Indians and from now on we're friends.

ALEGRE. We'd be dishonored
by such a friendship.

GASH. Well, give me the information,
and friends or not, I'll keep my word.

ALEGRE. Look for them
below the lower beach, under the mangroves.
They sleep near there at night. They were planning to catch the tide,
but it's not turned yet, and they'll be there still.

GASH. I'll post
a guard here, so don't try to leave the house.
If I find them, then we're all free and clear.
If I don't, if you've sent me on a cold trail,
then I'll need Victor. Murillo comes with me.

[*He goes out, carrying the guns and letting MURILLO precede him.*]

KING. But they'll be there. You told him where they are.

They're not gone yet.

ALEGRE. No.

KING. This was for me?

ALEGRE. I can't let you go out to die for them—
nor send them to die for you. He'll bring them here
and then—it may be—you must choose—

KING. Yes, he'll bring them here—
and they'll stand before me—and this big-mouth Gash
will ask are these the men—

ALEGRE. Yes.

KING. Will you say they are?

Could you say that?

ALEGRE. Yes, if you say it. Yes,
if you say they're guilty, I'll say it too.
It must be your decision.

KING. I'll choose to live then!

ALEGRE. No one can choose for you.

KING. Why shouldn't I choose it?

What else could be expected?

ALEGRE. You'll do what you must.

I've always heard one does what's generous
in danger. Saves others first and then oneself.

KING. Only it isn't a question of who's saved first,
it's a question of which is saved. It's one or the other
but it's not both. There has to be a scape-goat,
and either the Indians pay for Murillo's fun
or I pay for it.

ALEGRE. Yes.

KING. Then what you mean is

I should strike an attitude of what the hell
and walk off gallantly to a death on the gallows
to save two drones from a reservation?

ALEGRE. No,

I haven't said that. But can you stand face to face
with two innocent fugitives, and stand there silent
and load them with a crime to save yourself?

How could one do it and live? Would you wish to live
after they were gone?

KING. How else can I live?

ALEGRE. Any way that squares

with what a man, waking, may think of himself in the night
and not want to die before morning.

KING. But no way squares—

no way I could possibly think of, squares with the rules;
you're thinking of the old rules, the ancient code
established by the knights in the middle ages,
the old authentic code. And men don't live
by faith or honor or justice. That's revoked.
They live as they can, as the animals they are,
because it's impossible to arrange a life
by these fantastic, inexcusable rules.

Look at these laws of chivalry as they're laid
upon my soul tonight. Half an hour ago

I'm asked to die to protect a woman's choice
of the man she'll have. That's understandable.

All right, one can die for that. But now I'm asked
to forget about you, because that was less important,
and die for a couple of Indians out on the beach
that I don't know—meanwhile leaving the woman
to the mercy of the same scoundrel it was my job
to save her from before. Isn't it a question
whether I'm more useful here, and alive, and trying,
at least, to ward off Murillo?

ALEGRE. But we cannot choose,

either you or I, to purchase your safety or mine,
by offering up those two poor, wandering children
to Murillo and the sheriff. We simply can't,
whatever happens to us.

KING. Whatever happens?

Have you envisioned that?

ALEGRE. I have a revolver,
and I can use it.

KING. And would you?

ALEGRE. Do you doubt it?

KING. Then we both die—as a sacrifice to the rules.

It would be something to know who it is arranges these little ironies.

I came here running from a civil war
where madmen and morons tore a continent
apart to share it, where death and rape were common
as flies on a dead soldier, and alien men
were weary of native women. I ran from that storm
of rape and murder, because I couldn't help
and nobody could help, and I wanted at least
to save my life, in any crawling way,
and the great master of the laboratory
(wearing spectacles, probably) drives me down
to this bloody wharf, where I must choose again
between death and the rape of a woman, between death
and the murder of innocent men. I made my choice
long ago, and ran, and left them bleeding
there in the field. And I say it's better to live—
if one could live alone in the Everglades
and fill his stomach with fish, and sleep at night,
and knock his oysters from the mangrove roots,
and let the dead bury their dead, for there's no faith sure,
no magnanimity that won't give way
if you test it often enough, no love of woman
or love of man, that won't dry up in the end
if the drouth lasts long enough, no modesty
that isn't relative. There's no better than you
among all women—and yet when you envisioned
the choice between Murillo and your death
there was a flash when your mind asked itself,
must it be death? Is even the man Murillo
worse than death? And if you can ask the question
then there's more than one answer.

ALEGRE. How did you know that!

KING. Because the mind, the bright, quick-silver mind,
has but one purpose, to defend the body
and ward off death. Because it's the law of earth
where life was built up from the very first
on rape and murder—where the female takes what she gets
and learns to love it, and must learn to love it,
or the race would die! Show me one thing secure
among these names of virtues—justice and honor
and love and friendship—and I'll die for it gladly,
but where's justice, and where's honor, and where's friendship,
and what's love, under the rose?

ALEGRE. Then you've never loved.

KING. Not as you've loved, perhaps, for you assume that it's forever, and I've known, and know, that it's till the fire burns down, till the stimulant of something new or something stolen's gone, till you know all the intimate details and the girl's with child, and cries. And if that's true of love, it's true of all the other doors—the doors of all the illusions, and one by one we all jump at them. We jump first at the door with Christ upon it, hanging on the cross, then the door with Lenin, legislating heaven, then the emblem of social security, representing eighteen dollars a week, good luck or bad, jobs or no jobs—then the door with the girl expectant, the black triangle door, and they all give meaning to life, and mental sustenance, but then there comes a day when there's no sustenance, and you jump, and there's nothing you want to buy with money, and Christ hangs dead on the cross, as all men die, and Lenin legislates a fake paradise, and the girl holds out her arms, and she's made of sawdust, and there's sawdust in your mouth!

ALEGRE. But if this were true, then why would one live—woman or man or beast, or grub in the dark?

KING. To eat and sleep and breed and creep in the forest.

ALEGRE. Answer him, father, answer, because it sounds like truth—but if it were true one couldn't live! There is something in women that is as he says, and there is something in men that merely wants to live, but answer him! We're not like this!

D'ALCALA. Why, girl, we're all alone, here on the surface of a turning sphere of earth and water, cutting a great circle round the sun, just as the sun itself cuts a great circle round the central hub of some great constellation, which in turn wheels round another. Where this voyage started we don't know, nor where it will end, nor whether it has a meaning, nor whether there is good or evil, whether man has a destiny or happened here by chemical accident—all this we never know. And that's our challenge—to find ourselves in this desert of dead light-years,

blind, all of us, in a kingdom of the blind,
living by appetite in a fragile shell
of dust and water; yet to take this dust
and water and our range of appetites
and build them toward some vision of a god
of beauty and unselfishness and truth—
could we ask better of the mud we are
than to accept the challenge, and look up
and search for god-head? If it's true we came
from the sea-water—and children in the womb
wear gills a certain time in memory
of that first origin—we've come a long way;
so far there's no predicting what we'll be
before we end. It may be women help
this progress choosing out the men who seem
a fractional step beyond sheer appetite—
and it may be that's sacred, though my values
are hardly Biblical—and perhaps men help
by setting themselves forever, even to the death,
against cruelty and arbitrary power,
for that's the beast—the ancient, belly-foot beast
from which we came, which is strong within us yet,
and tries to drag us back down. Somehow or other,
in some obscure way, it's the love of woman
for man, and a certain freedom in her love
to choose tomorrow's men, and the leverage
in the interplay of choice between men and women,
that's brought us here—to this forking of the roads—
and may take us farther on.

KING. And where are we going?

D'ALCALA. To a conquest of all there is, whatever there is
among the suns and stars.

KING. And what if it's empty—

what if the whole thing's empty here in space
like a vast merry-go-round of eyeless gods
turning without resistance—Jupiter
and Mars and Venus, Saturn and Mercury,
carved out of rock and trailed with cloud and mist,
but nothing, and in all the constellations,
no meaning anywhere, nothing? Then if man gets up
and makes himself a god, and walks alone
among these limitless tensions of the sky,
and finds that he's eternally alone,
and can mean nothing, then what was the use of it,
why climb so high, and set ourselves apart
to look out on a place of skulls?

D'ALCALA. Now you want to know
what will come of us all, and I don't know that.
You should have asked the fish what would come of him
before the earth shrank and the land thrust up
between the oceans. You should have asked the fish
or asked me, or asked yourself, for at that time
we were the fish, you and I, or they were we—
and we, or they, would have known as much about it
as I know now—yet it somehow seems worth while
that the fish were not discouraged, and did keep on—
at least as far as we are.—For conditions
among the fish were quite the opposite
of what you'd call encouraging. They had
big teeth and no compunction. Bigger teeth
than Hitler or Murillo.

Over and over again the human race
climbs up out of the mud, and looks around,
and finds that it's alone here; and the knowledge
hits it like a blight—and down it goes
into the mud again.

Over and over again we have a hope
and make a religion of it—and follow it up
till we're out on the topmost limb of the tallest tree
alone with our stars—and we don't dare to be there,
and climb back down again.

It may be that the blight's on the race once more—
that they're all afraid—and fight their way to the ground.
But it won't end in the dark. Our destiny's
the other way. There'll be a race of men
who can face even the stars without despair,
and think without going mad. The boats are at
the point. Can you see them yet?

KING. They're turning back.

They've called the flashlights in, and got aboard,
and they'll be here soon. (*He picks up the picture from the table.*)
Why is my picture here?

ALEGRE. It was Victor's and he left it for me.
Let me have it.

KING. There's something written beneath.
May I read it?

ALEGRE. If you like.

KING (*reading*).

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.

Oh, no, it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand'ring bark
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

(He looks away from the picture and speaks from memory.)

Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

I learned it once in school and it still stays with me.
Why is this written here, under my picture?

ALEGRE. I wrote it there.

KING. Three years ago?

ALEGRE. One spring

when I felt most alone, the spring when Victor
first went away, I wrote it then; but not
because I was in love. It was much more than love,
it was a worship,
and I had a ritual I said before it
for matins in the morning, and for vespers
before I went to bed. He'd talked about you
and you were the singing hero of their venture
into the world, leading the great crusade
to make over the face of things. It was on your face—
this light of the future. It's on your face there yet,
on the picture in your hand.

KING. Have I changed so much?

ALEGRE. You've changed.

KING. And all this happened in the spring
three years ago.

ALEGRE. It happened in the spring
and lasted till this morning.

KING. You said you loved
someone who died in Spain.

ALEGRE. You died in Spain.

And now I see that everything you said
was true, and the poem's rhetoric, for love
does alter when it alteration finds,
or I'd love you still.

KING *(after a pause)*.

Yes. I did die in Spain.

And maybe this was what I came looking for,
this picture of the athlete who died young,

the portrait of one dead. I came a long way to get it, and tried to stay away, but now I have it and I'll know what to do.

[*Another pause.*]

And yet it's unfair somehow.

ALEGRE. Is it unfair?

KING. It doesn't come to us all. It comes to many in certain generations, comes to only a few in others; and it says, if you want to live you must die now—this instant—or the food you eat will rot at your lips, and the lips you kiss will turn to stone, and the very ground you tread will curl up under your footsteps like a snake and hiss behind you.—Yet if you're chosen out, or choose yourself, and go out to die, you die forever after, and that's farther away than one can say in light-years;—and the thing you die for is as far away as that.

You die to bring about a race of men who'll walk the heavens on a rope of sines and cosines, looking like Wells' Martian polyp, and operating on the womb of night with a long sharp equation. It's no fun to perish in your own person, when you're young, for this remote eventuality—even if it were attractive, which it's not; and so in the last analysis one dies because it's part of the bargain he takes on when he agrees to live.—A man must die for what he believes—if he's unfortunate enough to have to face it in his time—and if he won't then he'll end up believing in nothing at all—and that's death, too.

D'ALCALA. They're here

and they're bringing the Indians with them. And so perhaps that part of it's settled.

[*The right-hand door opens and SHERIFF GASH enters with MURILLO, the DEPUTY and the two INDIANS. HUNK, KILLARNEY, CORKY, GAGE and PRISCILLA follow them in.*]

GASH. Go in, go in!

D'ALCALA (*to HORN, putting out his hand to him*).

I'm sorry, sir. This wasn't our intention.

HORN. No doubt, no doubt!

The white man gives, the white man takes away.

Blessed be the name of the white man.

GASH. You keep your bargains to the letter, ma'am,

and I'll do the same by you. It seems the Indians were moving on tonight, but we came in time, and your brother or your friend, whichever it is, can sleep at home. Also here's your weapons, but what you're doing with a forty-five I wouldn't be sure. This thing'll break your wrist if you ever shoot it.

ALEGRE. It was my brother's.

KING. Yes, (*taking the revolver*)
you won't need it now.

GASH. Now I understand
there's been some trouble between Murillo here and the people of the house. I'm mentioning it because you're all here, and listening, and right now's the time to say, forget it—because there's one thing no business anywhere can afford to have and that's trouble with the authorities. There's been murder here on this point, but I can tell you now it was nobody's fault here locally. We've caught the likely suspects, and the thing to do's go back to work, and whatever quarrel there was put it out of your minds.—I'll be watching you from now on—and listening to reports—and I want to hear it's all peaceful here on Key Largo, and doing business as usual.

KING. Do I understand
that these two Indians are in custody
charged with the murder?

GASH. It looks as if they did it,
so they're under arrest, and you're discharged.

KING. I'm sorry
to have let things go so far. When you went out to hunt the Indians I was silent because I couldn't bring myself to face what I'd done and take the consequence. I thought—two Indians—let them die—and nobody knows I'm guilty, so it won't matter. But now I see their faces I can't let them die for me.

GASH. What are you guilty of?

KING. I murdered the foreman. They knew nothing about it.
I did it alone.

KILLARNEY. The boy's crazy!

KING. Oh, no, I'm not—
though I think I know why you say it. And I thank you. Still—I'm guilty. Confession's difficult at first, as you can imagine, but now it's out

there's a kind of relief, a kind of satisfaction in getting it over.—I can recommend it to anybody here who goes about with an old crime searing his soul. Perhaps Murillo has something on his conscience. If you have get it off and you'll feel better.

KILLARNEY. But he is crazy!

GASH. Son, if you go on I'll have to arrest you.

So keep your mouth shut.

KING. You'll arrest me, naturally, and let the Indians go, since I'm confessing the crime, and without accomplices.

GASH. Very well.

Is this on the level?

D'ALCALA. I think so.

KING. Let me point out my advantage as a defendant. I'm a good witness and I'll convict myself, whereas the Indians will probably protest their innocence—being innocent, as they are. I recommend that they be shown the door, and set afloat as quickly as possible.

GASH. Well, no, they're wanted as runaways.

KING. They'll make poor witnesses.

They have another theory of this crime as you probably know. Let's spare Mr. Murillo any unnecessary mention.

MURILLO. Get the Indians out. They know too much.

GASH. All right.

Take the handcuffs off them, and let them go.

[*The INDIANS are released.*]

You're sure you want it this way? There are witnesses and they've heard what you said.

KING. I'm certain of it.

GASH. Let them go.

[*The INDIANS go out.*]

KING. If they'd been allowed to talk do you know what they'd have said? That Murillo did it. Murillo there, who wouldn't injure a flower, or step on your hand, he's so chicken-hearted! Yes, but they'd have accused him! (*He draws the forty-five.*) Look, atom-smasher, we played a game this morning, you and I; revolver-on-the-belly or atom-smash-atom, and it seems to me you won—

GASH (*to his* DEPUTY). Take that gun from him!

MURILLO. Wait! Don't move, for God's sake! The fool means it!
Don't move or he'll kill me!

KING. Yes, I certainly would!

If anybody jumps at me you're done
because the triggers on these forty-fives
are tender as young love. I think you said
you weren't afraid to die, but what you meant
was that you knew I didn't have the guts
to shoot you. And I didn't. Only tonight
I have, and strangely enough, it's the other way round,
and I'm not afraid to die!

GASH. What are you trying to do?

KING. Once in a thousand years a mortal man
gets the same chance twice. Where we stood this morning
we stand now again. Give us elbow-room.

[*The others draw slowly back from them.*]

And now, my friend,
let me explain that we won't either of us
emerge from this predicament. This is curtains
for me and you. Black curtains and the end
as sure as you're a gambler. To save my soul
I have to get rid of you, and if you're to go
you'll certainly want me along.

MURILLO. Listen, boy, I'm licked.

I know when I'm licked. Put up your gun for God's sake
and I'll put mine up.

KING. Not at all. What I want now, atom-smasher,
is that you back out gently through that door,
putting out your hand behind you so you won't stumble
and die before your time. We'll go together—
always the gun-point on your belly-button—
and then we'll climb together into your car—
you first, climbing in backwards—and then we'll drive,
or rather you'll drive, Mr. Murillo, turning
to right or left as indicated, the gun
still on your unathletic periphery.

You may begin,
one foot behind the other, very softly;
and as we go, I'd like to say that for sheer
unadulterated pleasure to the heart,
for a happiness that beats against the side
and almost makes you weep, this game of yours
is tops with me. There was another door,
and one I never leaped at, and there's food
for the soul and mental sustenance, and mirth

to last out all the long night after dying
in the winning of this last hand. And thanks where they're due:
I thank you, Mr. Murillo, from my teeth,
for appearing out of the darkness of that hell
which is probably your home, to teach me the game,
and take me with you to earth!

MURILLO. Hold it, for God's sake!

Don't shoot at him!

[HUNK shoots KING and KING's gun fells MURILLO, who falls half outside the door. KING staggers to a chair and sits.]

GASH. God damn you, have you no brains?

HUNK. I had to do it!

KING. Oh, you lunk, you lunk-head,

I knew you couldn't stand it! You must be shooting.

I counted on you—and you did it!—Nevertheless

it looks as if you might have to do it again!

That first wasn't enough!

GASH. Sam, get those Indians

before they get away. No, wait a minute,

I can't use them now.

KING. Right, right, Mr. Sheriff;

now that Murillo's gone, there's not much point
in proving he was or wasn't. Let the Indians go.

Give them a chance at their happy hunting grounds.

They waited long enough for it!

ALEGRE. King, I was wrong!

You didn't have to die!

KING. Is this dying, Alegre?

Then it's more enviable than the Everglades,

to fight where you can win, in a narrow room,

and to win, dying.

GASH. Where's he hurt? Get him down here

flat, so he won't lose blood.

KING. No, let me alone.

Let me sit up and look him in the face

whoever he is. They say when they bury an Indian

they bury him seated upright in his grave

with his weapons around him. That's very sensible.

Very sensible. (*He slumps down.*)

GASH. You can't be sorry

for a man that planned it, and it all worked out,

and he got what he wanted.—

Just for the record, sir, this was your son?

D'ALCALA. He was my son.

GEORGE S. KAUFMAN *George S. Kaufman (b. 1889) is remarkably successful as a co-author. Nearly all of his many serious, comic, and musical plays have been written in collaboration, and since 1921 one or more of them have usually been enjoying long runs on the New York stage. This is a very incomplete list of his collaborations: Dulcy, Merton of the Movies, and Beggar on Horseback with Marc Connelly; The Royal Family, Dinner at Eight, and Stage Door with Edna Ferber; The Channel Road and The Dark Tower with Alexander Woollcott; June Moon with Ring Lardner; Of Thee I Sing and Let 'Em Eat Cake with Morrie Ryskind; You Can't Take It with You, I'd Rather Be Right, The American Way, The Man Who Came to Dinner, Oklahoma!, and Carousel with Moss Hart; and The Late George Apley with John P. Marquand. Of Thee I Sing received the Pulitzer Prize in 1933. In the theater Morrie Ryskind (b. 1895) has also worked chiefly as a collaborator, with others as well as with Kaufman. He is likewise well known as a writer for the motion pictures.*

MORRIE RYSKIND

OF THEE I SING

THE SCENES

ACT I

1. MAIN STREET
2. A HOTEL ROOM
3. ATLANTIC CITY
4. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
5. ELECTION NIGHT
6. WASHINGTON

ACT II

1. THE WHITE HOUSE
2. THE CAPITOL
3. THE SENATE
4. AGAIN THE WHITE HOUSE
5. THE YELLOW ROOM

CHARACTERS

LOUIS LIPPMAN
 FRANCIS X. GILHOOLEY
 MAID
 MATTHEW ARNOLD FULTON
 SENATOR ROBERT E. LYONS
 SENATOR CARVER JONES
 ALEXANDER THROTTLEBOTTOM
 JOHN P. WINTERGREEN
 SAM JENKINS
 DIANA DEVEREAUX

MARY TURNER
 MISS BENSON
 VLADIMIR VIDOVITCH
 YUSSEF YUSSEVITCH
 THE CHIEF JUSTICE
 SCRUBWOMAN
 THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR
 SENATE CLERK
 GUIDE

Photographers, Policemen, Supreme Court Justices, Secretaries, Sight-seers, Newspapermen, Senators, Flunkies, Guests, etc.

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ACT ONE—SCENE ONE

Any city in America—with a political parade in progress. The marchers, with their torchlights and banners, move against a shadowy background of skyscrapers, churches, and—almost certainly—speakeasies. Across this background is flung a huge election banner, on which are Gargantuan reproductions of the faces of the party's candidates. Highlit and prominent is the party battlecry:

FOR PRESIDENT:

JOHN P. WINTERGREEN

The name of the vice-presidential candidate, however, is lost in shadow. As for the countenances of the candidates, it is a little hard to pick them out in the general blur, and the chances are that that's a break for the party.

The procession shambles across the scene, singing as it goes. The song is a combination of all the campaign tunes of the past, into most of which the recurrent phrase, "Wintergreen for President," seems mysteriously to fit. This brilliant slogan is repeated on many of the banners, with "Win with Wintergreen" another favorite. On other banners are such sentiments as:

"Vote for Prosperity and See What You Get."

"A Vote for Wintergreen Is a Vote for Wintergreen."

"Hawaii Wants Wintergreen."

"Turn the Reformers Out."

"Wintergreen—A Man's Man's Man."

"Wintergreen—The Flavor Lasts."

"He Kept Us Out of Jail."

"Even Your Dog Loves John P. Wintergreen."

"The Full Dinner Jacket."

As the procession wends its way a line or two of lyric emerges from the general singing:

"He's the man the people choose—
Loves the Irish and the Jews."

It passes on into darkness, band playing, banners flying, torches flaring.

ACT ONE—SCENE TWO

A room in a hotel, and a pretty shabby room it is. It is, however, the temporary headquarters of those mysterious politicians who make up the National Campaign Committee. It's not that they couldn't afford a better hotel, for the party is notoriously rich, but somehow this room seems thoroughly in keeping with the men who occupy it.

Two of the committeemen are present when the curtain goes up. Their names are FRANCIS X. GILHOOLEY and LOUIS LIPPMAN, and they are, of course, representatives of those two races which the candidate so loves. MR. GILHOOLEY sits in his shirtsleeves at a small table, and between drinks of White Rock—well, maybe not White Rock—he is trying to work out a game of solitaire. MR. LIPPMAN, also coatless, sprawls on the bed with a newspaper.

The room is thick with cigar smoke.

MR. LIPPMAN yawns, stretches, and puts down his newspaper. There comes a knock on the door.

LIPPMAN. Come in.

[A CHAMBERMAID enters, carrying towels.]

CHAMBERMAID. I brought you some towels. (To GILHOOLEY, as she passes him) I'm just going to the bathroom.

GILHOOLEY. First door to the left.

[The MAID disappears into the bathroom as the telephone rings.]

LIPPMAN (at the 'phone). So what? . . . Who? . . . What's his name? . . . Throttle what? . . . Must have the wrong room. This is the National Committee . . . I say this is the National Campaign Committee. (Hangs up) Some fellow downstairs. (The CHAMBERMAID re-enters.)

GILHOOLEY. Did you find it?

CHAMBERMAID. Shall I turn the bed down now?

LIPPMAN. Sure. Go ahead.

CHAMBERMAID. I can't turn it down unless you get off it.

LIPPMAN. Oh, then the hell with it!

CHAMBERMAID. Yes, sir. Shall I come back later?

LIPPMAN. Why not?

CHAMBERMAID. Yes, sir. (She goes.)

LIPPMAN. Nice girl.

GILHOOLEY (rising and stretching). Ho-hum! Certainly is great to take it easy for a while.

LIPPMAN. Yep. It was a tough convention, all right.

GILHOOLEY. I'll say it was tough. Sixty-three ballots.

LIPPMAN. But we put the ticket over. That's the big thing.

GILHOOLEY. Well, there's still the election. I don't mind telling you I'm a little bit worried.

LIPPMAN. Say, we never lost an election yet, and we've had a lot worse candidates.

GILHOOLEY. It ain't just the candidates—it's the whole party.

LIPPMAN. What do you mean the whole party?

GILHOOLEY. Mm. I think maybe they're kind of getting wise to us.

LIPPMAN. Say! If they haven't got wise to us in forty years they'll never get wise.

GILHOOLEY. Yah, but I don't like the way they've been acting lately. You know, we never should have sold Rhode Island.

LIPPMAN. We've got a great ticket, haven't we? For President: John P. Wintergreen. He even *sounds* like a President.

GILHOOLEY. That's why we picked him.

LIPPMAN. And for vice-president—(*Hesitates*)—what's the name of that fellow we nominated for vice-president?

GILHOOLEY. Ah—Pitts, wasn't it?

LIPPMAN. No, no—it was a longer name.

GILHOOLEY. Barbinelli?

LIPPMAN. No.

GILHOOLEY. Well, that's longer.

LIPPMAN. You're a hell of a National Committeeman. Don't even know the name of the vice-president we nominated.

[MATTHEW ARNOLD FULTON *enters*. MR. FULTON *owns a string of newspapers, and he is not without power in this land of ours.*]

[*There are the customary greetings.*]

LIPPMAN. Hey, Fulton! To decide a bet: what's the name of that fellow we nominated for vice-president?

FULTON. What? Oh—Schaeffer, wasn't it?

GILHOOLEY. That's right!

LIPPMAN. No, no! Schaeffer turned it down.

FULTON. Oh, yes.

GILHOOLEY. Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Are you sure we nominated a vice-president?

FULTON. Of course. Didn't I make the nominating speech?

GILHOOLEY. Oh, yeah.

FULTON (*thoughtful*). What was his name again?

GILHOOLEY. Well, think a minute. How did you come to nominate him?

LIPPMAN. Who introduced him to you?

FULTON. Nobody introduced him. I picked his name out of a hat. We put a lot of names in a hat, and this fellow lost.

[*The telephone again.*]

LIPPMAN. Hello . . . No, no, you've got the wrong room. . . . What's his name again? . . . Gotabottle? . . . Oh, Throttlebottom. Wait a minute. (*To the others*) Guy named Bottlethrottle says he has an appointment with somebody here.

FULTON. Never heard of him.

GILHOOLEY. Not me.

LIPPMAN (*into 'phone*). Must have the wrong room. Tell him this is the National Committee . . . Well, then tell him it *isn't* the National Committee. . . . Hello. And give me room service, will you?

GILHOOLEY (*lighting a cigar*). What do you know, Matty?

FULTON. I know I'm thirsty.

GILHOOLEY (*producing a bottle*). Got just the ticket.

FULTON. Had it analyzed?

GILHOOLEY. Had it psycho-analyzed.

LIPPMAN. Room Service? This is 413. Listen—send up a half a dozen bottles

of White Rock, a couple of ginger ales—(*To the others*) Who's paying for this?

GILHOOLEY. General party expense.

LIPPMAN (*into 'phone*). Make that a dozen White Rock. And some dill pickles. (*Hangs up*) Well, Matty, how's the newspaper king?

FULTON. Well, if you want to know, a little bit worried.

LIPPMAN. What's the matter?

FULTON. Well, I've just been over to the office doing some long distance 'phoning. Called up about twenty of my editors all over the country, and it's not going to be the cinch we figured on.

GILHOOLEY (*to LIPPMAN*). What did I tell you?

LIPPMAN. What did you find out?

FULTON. Just that. It isn't going to be the cinch we—

[*Enter SENATORS CARVER JONES and ROBERT E. LYONS. SENATOR JONES is from the West, and SENATOR LYONS is from the South. And maybe you don't think they know it.*]

JONES. Ah, gentlemen, good evening!

LYONS. Gentlemen!

GILHOOLEY. Hello, Senator!

LIPPMAN. Senator!

FULTON. How about Wintergreen? Is he coming over?

JONES (*right up on the rostrum*). My friends, I am informed on excellent authority that John P. Wintergreen will shortly honor us with his presence.

FULTON. Fine! Gentlemen, you probably wonder why I asked you over here.

LYONS (*sighting the liquor and pouring himself a good one*). Something about a drink, wasn't it?

FULTON. Senator Jones—

JONES (*bounding to his feet*). My friends—

FULTON. Senator Jones—

JONES. My good friends—

FULTON. You're a man that keeps his ear close to the ground. What do they think about the ticket in the West?

JONES. My very good friends. (*He clears his throat*) John P. Wintergreen is a great man—one of the greatest that the party has nominated since Alexander Franklin. . . .

LYONS. And Robert E. Lee.

JONES. Unfortunately, however, while the people of the West admire our party, and love our party, and respect our party, they do not trust our party. And so, gentlemen, in the name of those gallant boys who fought overseas, and the brave mothers who sent them, we must not, we cannot, we dare not allow Russian Bolshevism to dump cheap Chinese labor on these free American shores! Gentlemen, I thank you. (*He finishes his drink, and sits.*)

FULTON. Thank you, sir. And now, Senator Lyons, tell us about the South.

LYONS (*who doesn't need to be asked twice*). Gentlemen, you ask me about the South. It is the land of romance, of roses and honeysuckle, of Southern chivalry and hospitality, fried chicken and waffles, salad and coffee.

LIPPMAN. No dessert?

FULTON. Thank you, gentlemen. That just about confirms what my editors have been telling me. The people of this country demand John P. Wintergreen for president, and they're going to get him whether they like it or not. And between you and me, gentlemen, I don't think they like it. (*There is a knock on the door*) Come in.

[*The door is slowly opened. Enter a timid little man—hopefully smiling. His name, believe it or not, is ALEXANDER THROTTLEBOTTOM.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Hi, gentlemen!

FULTON. Yes, sir. What can we do for you?

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*all smiles*). Hello, Mr. Fulton.

FULTON. I'm afraid I don't quite place you. Your face is familiar, but—

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I'm Throttlebottom.

FULTON. What?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Alexander Throttlebottom.

JONES (*pushing him right out*). We're very busy, my good man. If you'll just—

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But I'm Throttlebottom.

FULTON. I understand, Mr. Teitelbaum, but just at present—

GILHOOLEY. You come back later on.

LIPPMAN. After we're gone.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*insistent about it*). But I'm Throttlebottom. I'm the candidate for vice-president.

FULTON. That's the fellow!

GILHOOLEY. Of course!

LIPPMAN. Sure!

FULTON. What's your name again?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Alexander—

FULTON. Of course! I nominated you! Alexander! Boys, this is— What's your first name, Mr. Alexander?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. That's my first name. Alexander.

FULTON. Well, well, Alexander Alexander.

GILHOOLEY. Well, that certainly is a coincidence.

[*A WAITER has arrived with the accessories. Check in hand, he looks uncertainly around for the victim.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But that isn't my last name. It's Throttlebottom.

LIPPMAN. Throttle what?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Bottom.

LIPPMAN. How do you spell it?

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*as he starts to spell* LIPPMAN *takes the check from the WAITER and writes*). "T-h-r-o-t-t-l-e-b-o-t-t-o-m."

LIPPMAN. Right! And thank you very much.

[*The WAITER goes, and with him the signed check.*]

FULTON. Well, sir, we're very glad indeed to see you, and very proud to have you on our ticket. Sit down.

[*They all sit, leaving no place for THROTTLEBOTTOM.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Thanks. I won't sit. I'm only going to stay a minute. There's something I came up to see you about.

FULTON. What's that?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Being vice-president. I want to know if you won't let me off.

FULTON. What!

GILHOOLEY. What do you mean?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I don't want to be vice-president. I want to resign.

FULTON. Why, you can't do that!

JONES. That's treason!

LYONS. Absurd, suh!

LIPPMAN. Why don't you want to be vice-president? That's a good job.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. It's—it's on account of my mother. Suppose she found out?

FULTON. You've got a mother?

GILHOOLEY. He's got a mother.

LIPPMAN. This is a fine time to tell us!

FULTON. Yes, why didn't you tell us? You can't back out now. Everything's printed.

GILHOOLEY. Listen—she'll never hear about it.

JONES. Of course not.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But maybe she will. Somebody may tell her.

LIPPMAN. Who'll tell her?

FULTON. Nobody'll know!

GILHOOLEY. You'll forget it yourself in three months.

FULTON. Of course!

LIPPMAN (*ever the salesman*). Besides, suppose something should happen to the president?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. What?

LIPPMAN. Suppose something should happen to the president? Then you become president.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Me?

LIPPMAN. Sure.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. President! Say!

LIPPMAN. Let's drink to that! To our next president!

[*There is a great passing of glasses, and THROTTLEBOTTOM comes out of it without one. He dashes into the bathroom, and emerges with one of those green tumblers.*]

GILHOOLEY. Our next president!

JONES. Our next president!

[*And he enters. JOHN P. WINTERGREEN himself.*]

WINTERGREEN. I'll drink to that! (*Takes the glass from the extended arm of JONES and drinks.*)

JONES (*as the others greet him*). You dirty crook!

WINTERGREEN. I'll drink to that too!

LIPPMAN. Well, how's the candidate?

WINTERGREEN. Thirsty. Say, doesn't a fellow get a drink? (*He sees the drink*

THROTTLEBOTTOM *has just poured for himself, and takes it from his hand*) Ah! Thank you, waiter. And get me one of those dill pickles, will you?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But I'm not—

WINTERGREEN. There they are—right over there. (THROTTLEBOTTOM *obediently goes for the pickle*) Well, gentlemen, it certainly was a great convention. I never expected to get the nomination. Didn't *want* the nomination. Never was so surprised as when my name came up. (*Takes pickle from THROTTLEBOTTOM, and gives him the empty glass.*)

GILHOOLEY. Who brought it up, anyhow?

FULTON. Yah. Who was that in the back calling "Wintergreen!"

WINTERGREEN. That was me. Most spontaneous thing you ever saw. So here I am, gentlemen—nominated by the people, absolutely my own master, and ready to do any dirty work the committee suggests. (*In one quick movement he takes the full glass THROTTLEBOTTOM has finally succeeded in getting for himself, and replaces it with the pickle.*)

LYONS. Mr. President—

WINTERGREEN. I'll drink to that too! Anything else, gentlemen? Anything at all! (FULTON, *meanwhile, is nervously pacing*) What's the matter, Fulton? Something wrong? You're not sober, are you?

FULTON (*his tone belying the words*). No, no! I'm all right.

WINTERGREEN. Must be something up. (*A look at the others*) What's the matter?

LIPPMAN (*deprecatingly*). A lot of schmoos.

FULTON. Well, it's this way. Begins to look as though there may be a little trouble ahead.

WINTERGREEN. Trouble?

FULTON. I don't think the people are quite satisfied with the party record.

WINTERGREEN. Who said they *were*?

FULTON. Well, you know what Lincoln said.

WINTERGREEN. Who?

FULTON. Lincoln.

GILHOOLEY. What did he say?

WINTERGREEN. Was it funny?

FULTON. "You can fool some of the people all the time, and you can fool all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time."

WINTERGREEN. Was that Lincoln?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Abraham J. Lincoln.

WINTERGREEN. It's different nowadays. People are bigger suckers.

GILHOOLEY. We made one bad mistake. Never should have sold Rhode Island.

WINTERGREEN. Rhode Island! Nobody missed it! (*A gesture indicating its size*) Where is Rhode Island now? Anybody know?

FULTON. New York some place. Never get it back.

WINTERGREEN (*a slap of the hands*). I'll tell you what! We'll leave it out

of the campaign—not mention it! (*There is a chorus of approval*) Yes, sir, that's the idea—we won't mention it!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But suppose somebody else brings it up?

WINTERGREEN. Don't answer 'em! It takes two to make an argument. (*Gazes curiously at THROTTLEBOTTOM*) I thought this was a closed meeting.

FULTON. Sure it is. Why?

WINTERGREEN (*whispering*). Who's that?

FULTON (*also whispering*). Vice-president.

WINTERGREEN (*whispers*). What?

FULTON. This is Mr. Wintergreen. Mr.—ah—ah—

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*who has also forgotten it*). Ah—ah—Throttlebottom.

[*They shake hands.*]

WINTERGREEN. Haven't I seen you before some place?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I gave you that dill pickle.

WINTERGREEN. Of course!

FULTON. But look here, Mr. President—it's not only Rhode Island. There've been a whole lot of things the last four years.

GILHOOLEY. How about the four years before that?

WINTERGREEN. I'll tell you what—let's stick to the party record of 1776. That was a good year.

LIPPMAN. What's the matter with 1492?

WINTERGREEN. We can use that year too. We won't mention anything before 1492, or after 1776. That gives us pretty nearly three hundred years.

FULTON. Say, that's great!

LYONS. Just a minute, suh! Down South the people want to hear about the Civil War.

WINTERGREEN. What year was that?

LYONS (*exploring his pockets*). I haven't got the exact figures with me, but it was around 1812.

WINTERGREEN. 1812—let's see. . . .

THROTTLEBOTTOM. What year was 1812?

WINTERGREEN. Well, how about putting the Civil War back in 1776?

LYONS. Perfectly satisfactory, suh. Perfectly satisfactory.

JONES. Eminently fair.

FULTON. Yah, but it isn't enough.

GILHOOLEY. No! What we need is a good live issue!

FULTON. Yes! That's what we need—an issue. Something that everybody is interested in, and that doesn't matter a damn. Something the party can stand on.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*who has to know everything*). Excuse me, gentlemen, but what party are we?

WINTERGREEN. We've got plenty of time for that. The important thing is to get elected.

JONES. You see, we're Republicans in most states.

LYONS. But the South is Democratic.

JONES. Oh, sure! We're Democrats down there.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*to WINTERGREEN*). I had a dog that was bitten by a Democrat.

WINTERGREEN (*whispers to JONES*). Who the hell is that?

JONES (*whispers*). Vice-president.

[*The CHAMBERMAID returns.*]

CHAMBERMAID. Excuse me. (*She goes through the bathroom door.*)

FULTON. Boys, I tell you this is serious. We've got to get something that'll take hold of the popular imagination—sweep the country.

LIPPMAN. The country could stand a good sweeping.

JONES. Mr. Fulton is quite correct.

CHAMBERMAID (*emerging from the bathroom*). Can I turn the bed down now?

FULTON. What?

CHAMBERMAID. Can I turn the bed down now?

FULTON. Say—come here a minute. (*The MAID and THROTTLEBOTTOM both start toward FULTON. To THROTTLEBOTTOM*) No, not you! (*To the MAID*) You're an American citizen?

CHAMBERMAID. Yes, sir.

FULTON. Ever vote?

CHAMBERMAID (*what an idea!*). Oh, no, sir.

FULTON. What do you care more about than anything else in the world?

CHAMBERMAID. I don't know. Money, I guess.

GILHOOLEY. That's no good.

WINTERGREEN. Brings up Rhode Island.

FULTON. Of course, money. We all want money. But there must be something else, isn't there?

CHAMBERMAID (*thinks*). No—I like money.

FULTON (*exasperated*). But after money, what?

CHAMBERMAID. Well, maybe love.

FULTON. Love?

CHAMBERMAID. Yeh. *You* know, to meet a nice young fellow that's crazy about you, and you're crazy about him, and you get engaged, and then you get married, and—you know—love.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*a trifle fussed*). Sure.

FULTON (*rather thoughtful*). Oh, yes. Thank you. Thank you very much.

CHAMBERMAID. Shall I turn the bed down now, sir?

FULTON. Not now. Come back later on.

CHAMBERMAID. Yes, sir. (*Starts to go.*)

FULTON. Ah—here you are. (*Starts to give her a coin. THROTTLEBOTTOM reaches for it*) No, not you.

CHAMBERMAID. Thank you, sir. (*Goes.*)

LIPPMAN. Well, you got a lot out of that.

WINTERGREEN. Put women into politics and that's what you get. Love.

GILHOOLEY. Love!

FULTON (*slowly*). What's the matter with love?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I like love!

FULTON. People *do* care more about love than anything else. Why, they steal for it, they even kill for it.

WINTERGREEN. But will they vote for it?

FULTON. You bet they will! If we could find some way to put it over—why, we could get every vote. Everybody loves a lover; the whole world loves a—
(*Stops as he gets an idea; looks fixedly at WINTERGREEN.*)

WINTERGREEN. What's the matter?

FULTON. I've got it!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. He's got it!

FULTON. You've got to fall in love!

WINTERGREEN. You're crazy!

FULTON. You've got to fall in love with a typical American girl!

WINTERGREEN. Huh?

LIPPMAN. What good's that?

GILHOOLEY. What are you talking about?

JONES. What for?

FULTON. Wait a minute! You make love to her from now till Election Day as no girl was ever made love to before!

WINTERGREEN. What's the gag?

GILHOOLEY. Yeah!

LIPPMAN. So what?

FULTON. My God, are you blind? You do this right and you'll get elected by the greatest majority that the American people ever gave a candidate! You'll get every vote!

WINTERGREEN. But wait a minute—

GILHOOLEY. I think there's something in it.

JONES. It sounds good!

LYONS. Certainly does!

LIPPMAN. Say!

FULTON. I tell you it's great!

WINTERGREEN. But look here—

FULTON. You'll go down in history as the greatest lover this country has ever known! You'll be the romantic ideal of every man, woman and child in America!

WINTERGREEN. Oh, no! I don't want anything like that!

FULTON. But man, it's the biggest thing in the world! A hundred million hearts will beat as one; they'll follow your courtship in every State in the Union! You meet the girl, you fall in love with her, you propose, you're accepted, and you're swept into the White House on a tidal wave of love!

WINTERGREEN. But there's nobody I'm in love with! I'm not in love with anybody!

FULTON. We'll get the girl! That'll be easy!

LIPPMAN. My wife's sister!

FULTON. I've got the idea! We'll have a contest—a nation-wide contest to

select Miss White House—choose the most beautiful girl from every State—get them all together at Atlantic City, pick the winner and you fall in love with her!

[*Chorus: "Yah!" "Great!" "That's it!"*]

WINTERGREEN. But suppose I *don't* fall in love with her!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Then *I* get her!

FULTON. You can't *help* falling in love with her! The most beautiful girl in America! I tell you this is wonderful! (*Into the telephone*) Give me Beekman 5000.

WINTERGREEN. Give me another drink!

LIPPMAN. Let's all have another drink! Scotch or rye, Jack?

WINTERGREEN. Both!

FULTON. Give me Jenkins! Hello!

LIPPMAN. Say when!

FULTON. That's what I said—Jenkins!

WINTERGREEN. That's enough! (*Takes the bottle instead of the glass.*)

FULTON. Jenkins? Fulton! Stop the presses! John P. Wintergreen will run for President on a one-word platform: Love! National beauty contest in Atlantic City to select Miss White House! Now listen! I want a love cartoon on the front page of every one of my papers from now till Election Day! Right! And call up Coolidge and tell him I want a thousand words on love tomorrow morning!

CURTAIN

ACT ONE—SCENE THREE

Atlantic City—with the beauty contest in full swing. The scene is a section of the boardwalk, and the various candidates for First Lady are in about three-quarter-piece bathing suits. For it is notorious, of course, that the prime requisite for a First Lady is that she should look well in a bathing suit.

To music and lyric the candidates introduce themselves:

Who is the lucky girl to be?
Ruler of Washington, D. C.?
Who is to be the blushing bride?
Who will sleep at the President's side?
Strike up the cymbals, drum and fife!
One of us is the President's future wife!

We're in Atlantic City
To meet with the committee,
And when they've made their mind up
The winner will be signed up.
The prize is consequential—
Presidential!

Our bodies will bear witness
To our fitness.

If a girl is sexy
She may be Mrs. Prexy!
One of us is the President's future wife!

[*Enter the GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS, cameras in hand.*]

PHOTOGRAPHERS. More important than a photograph of Parliament,
Or a shipwreck on the sea—
What'll raise the circulation
Of our paper through the nation
Is the dimple on your knee.

More important than a photograph of Parliament,
Or a Western spelling bee,
Or the latest thing in science,
For our pleasure loving clients
Is the dimple on your knee.

GIRLS. More important than a photograph of Parliament
Is the dimple on my knee:
But supposing I am losing
When the judges are a-choosing—
What will my poor future be?

Do I have to go back to the cafeteria
With my lovely dimpled knee?
Does a girl who's so ambitious
Have to work at washing dishes?
I'm afraid that worries me.

PHOTOGRAPHERS. Don't worry, little girl,
For even if you lose the prize—
Don't worry, little girl,
Myself, I can't resist your eyes.

GIRLS. I'll worry, if you please,
Until you tell what's on your mind.

PHOTOGRAPHERS. Don't worry, little girl—
I've asked my heart and this is what I find—
Don't worry, little girl,
Don't worry, little girl.

GIRLS. Why shouldn't we worry?

PHOTOGRAPHERS. Because, because, because, because,
Because you're in the money
With a smile that's sweet and sunny
I could fall for you myself.

Because, because, because, because
 Your looks are so appealing
 They have given me a feeling
 I could fall for you myself.
 The thrills you're sending through me
 Are doing something to me
 The opposite of gloomy,—
 If they don't want you, *I* want you!

Because, because, because, because,
 Because your ways are simple,
 And your knee can show a dimple
 I could fall for you myself.

Next: The Committee headquarters in one of the grander Boardwalk hostelryes. A few banners on the walls proclaim the fact that this is no longer just a hotel parlor, but the center of national interest. A few dozen girls, still in bathing suits, are scattered around the room.

Enter MR. FULTON, followed by the faithful GILHOOLEY and a handful of newspapermen and newsreelers.

GILHOOLEY (*to the MOVIE MEN*). Come on, boys! Set 'em up right here—that'll give you a good angle! Hello, ladies!

FULTON. Well, well! What a crowd! How are you, ladies? This certainly is a big day, all right! Must be ten thousand people outside this hotel! Never saw so much excitement in all my life!

ONE OF THE GIRLS. Say! What does a President's wife have to do, anyhow?

GILHOOLEY. That depends on the President.

[*A young woman comes forward to greet MR. FULTON. She is chiefly distinguished from the other girls by the fact that she is dressed. Her name is MARY TURNER.*]

MARY. Good morning, Mr. Fulton.

FULTON. Well, Miss Turner! Having quite a day, huh?

MARY. Quite a day, Mr. Fulton.

FULTON. Heard some very nice things about the way you've been handling this. Afraid I'll have to give you a raise.

MARY. Well, I'm afraid I'll have to take it.

[*Enter those two pillars of the government—SENATORS JONES and LYONS.*]

LYONS. Afternoon, gentlemen! Ladies!

FULTON. Ah, here's some of the committee now! Good afternoon, gentlemen!

JONES. Mr. Fulton! Good afternoon, ladies! Good afternoon. (*Beams on the PHOTOGRAPHERS*) Well! Quite a battery you have here—quite a battery!

LYONS. Gentlemen of the press!

JONES. Very glad to see you, gentlemen! Always glad to meet the newspaper boys!

[*Enter a lad named JENKINS, who is one of FULTON's various assistants.*]

JENKINS. Good morning, Chief!

FULTON. Oh, hello, Jenkins!

JONES. Hello, there! I've met you before! Never forget a face! Just tell me—we've met before? Am I right?

JENKINS. Right you are, Senator!

JONES (*SO pleased with himself*). Right! Where was it?

JENKINS. San Francisco. That opium joint on 4th Street.

JONES (*not so pleased*). Well, I guess I got the wrong man. Remarkable resemblance, though, remarkable resemblance.

[THROTTLEBOTTOM *enters. Still hoping.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Hello, everybody! Hello, Mr. Fulton!

GILHOOLEY. Hello, there!

JONES. How are you?

LYONS. Good morning, suh!

FULTON. Who is that guy?

GILHOOLEY. Vice-president.

FULTON. Oh, yes. Hello! How are you?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Are these the girls? I'm Mr. Throttlebottom. (*Sights a promising girl*) Hello! How are you?

THE GIRL. Fine!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Is your mother down here with you?

THE GIRL (*she's no fool*). Yes, sir.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Oh! Well! Never mind!

FULTON (*goes to THROTTLEBOTTOM*). Say, look here a minute. You know, vice-presidents don't usually go around in public. They're not supposed to be seen.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But I'm not vice-president yet. Couldn't I go around a little longer?

GILHOOLEY. That isn't the point. If you're going to be vice-president you've got to practice up for it. You've got to go in hiding.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But I came up the back way.

FULTON. You shouldn't have come at all. Suppose somebody sees you?

GILHOOLEY. We'd lose the election.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. You mean you want me to hide from everybody?

JONES. That's it!

FULTON. Right!

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*gets an idea*). I could go back to my old business.

FULTON. What's that?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I used to be a hermit.

FULTON. Great!

GILHOOLEY. That's the idea!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. The only thing is, I thought you might want me to make some speeches.

FULTON. No, no!

GILHOOLEY. You just go and sit in your cave.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*thinks it over*). I know. I could go back to the cave and write my speeches there.

FULTON. That's the idea!

JONES. Perfect!

GILHOOLEY. And make 'em there, too!

JONES. Don't let anybody find you—don't let anybody see you.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I won't. I won't even come out in February to cast my shadow. (*He goes.*)

[*Enter, then, a particularly beautiful girl named DIANA DEVEREAUX. She is from the South, as one speedily discovers when she speaks.*]

DIANA. Mo'nin', Senator Lyons.

LYONS. Well, Miss Devereaux! And how is the fairest flower of the South?

DIANA. Senator Lyons, that's the prettiest thing been said to me since I left Louisiana. I sure been gettin' pow'ful homesick.

ONE OF THE GIRLS (*who seems to be a little embittered*). She sure is getting pow'ful Southern.

LYONS. You're just a breath of the old Southland.

DIANA. Senator, you keep on sayin' sweet things like that and I'm just going to throw my arms right around your neck.

FULTON. You never made me an offer like that, Miss Devereaux.

DIANA. Why, Mr. Fulton!

FULTON. Yes, sir, when I look around I'm sorry I didn't run for President myself.

DIANA. You'd make a mighty nice consolation prize. Wouldn't he, girls?

FULTON. Now, now! Matter of fact, we're getting up some consolation prizes. Got that list, Jenkins?

JENKINS. Here you are, sir.

FULTON. Of course the first prize, as you all know, is Mr. Wintergreen himself. The second prize is a season pass to Coney Island. And the third prize is an autographed photograph of Clara Bow, or ten cents in gold. (*There is a burst of cheering in the distance. Enter WINTERGREEN, followed by LIPPMAN and practically all the reporters in the world*) Well, well! The candidate himself! Hello, Jack!

WINTERGREEN. Hello, there!

FULTON. Ladies, permit me to introduce your future husband, John P. Wintergreen! Here they are, Jack. How do you like 'em?

WINTERGREEN (*a trifle nervously*). Why, they're wonderful. Hello! How are you?

FULTON. Say something to them.

WINTERGREEN. Well, ladies, this certainly is a pleasure. All I can say is I love you, and you're the only girls I have ever loved. (*With growing nervousness*) And after we're married, I hope you'll all be happy, and—listen, Fulton, I can't go through with this.

FULTON. You've got to go through with it.

WINTERGREEN. But I don't know any of these girls! How can I marry them?

If it was only somebody I knew, like— Lippman, whatever became of your wife's sister?

LIPPMAN (*with a shake of the head*). Not in a bathing suit.

FULTON. By the way, Jack, I want you to meet Miss Diana Devereaux.

LYONS. Miss Devereaux, may I have the honor—

DIANA. Mr. President, I'm mighty happy to meet you! I hope we're going to see a lot of each other.

WINTERGREEN. Any hope of yours, Miss Devereaux, is a hope of mine, I hope.

DIANA. You keep on saying sweet things like that and I'm just going to throw my arms right around your neck.

[*The girls chime in when she is half-way through the sentence and finish it right with her, Southern accent and all.*]

WINTERGREEN. Seems to be quite an echo here.

DIANA (*playing with his lapel*). Have you-all got a fraternity pin?

WINTERGREEN. Well, would a safety pin do?

DIANA. Mr. Wintergreen, you've got the grandest sense of humor.

MARY. All right, Mr. Fulton.

FULTON. And now, ladies—attention, please! The time has come for the final test. (*The girls start a general primping and there is an excited buzz*) It has been a grueling contest—you have been under a great strain. And we of the committee want to thank you—and through you the three million others who took part in this contest, only ninety-eight per cent of whom had to be sent home for misbehavior. And now, ladies, the judges await you. And may the best girl win.

GIRLS (*to music*). Who is the lucky girl to be—
Ruler of Washington, D. C.?

DIANA. Bye-bye, Mr. President—I'm a-prayin'
I'm the little lady they're okayin'.

GIRLS. Strike up the cymbals, drum and fife:
One of us is the President's future wife!

[*They go. WINTERGREEN, his nervousness mounting, is left alone in the room. But not quite alone, for at her desk in the corner MARY TURNER is quietly working.*]

WINTERGREEN (*as he sees her*). Oh! (*Takes a moment*) Say! (*She turns*) You haven't got a drink on you, have you?

MARY. Why, no. I'm sorry.

WINTERGREEN. That's all right. Didn't want it anyhow. (*Pacing.*)

MARY. Little bit nervous?

WINTERGREEN (*whirling*). Who? Me? What have I got to be nervous about?

MARY. That's what I was wondering. Twenty-four of the most beautiful girls in the country—and you get the winner. Lot of men would like to be in your shoes.

WINTERGREEN. Yeah, but it's my bedroom slippers I'm worrying about. . . . Say, you've been watching them—who do you think it's going to be?

MARY. I couldn't say. Likely to be any one of them.

WINTERGREEN. That's what I was afraid of. But which one? What's your guess?

MARY. Well, don't hold me to it, but I shouldn't be surprised if it were Miss Devereaux.

WINTERGREEN. Devereaux! I thought so! That's the one with the Southern exposure?

MARY. That's Miss Devereaux. She's a good-looking girl, don't you think?

WINTERGREEN (*in heavy Southern accent*). Yes, she's a good-looking gal, all right.

MARY (*falling right into line*). Don't you-all like good-looking gals?

WINTERGREEN. Down Carolina way we're all a-crazy about good-looking gals, but we-all don't like 'em talking that-a-way.

MARY. How do you-all like 'em to talk, sure enough?

WINTERGREEN (*abandons the dialect*). Say, that's terrible, isn't it? If she wins would I have to listen to that all the time?

MARY. But she does it charmingly. And she's very beautiful.

WINTERGREEN. Beautiful, yeah—I like a beautiful girl—they're all right, but—(*he stumbles*)—when a fellow gets married he wants a home, a mother for his children.

MARY. You've got children?

WINTERGREEN. No, no, I mean if I was married. You see, when you're married—well, *you* know.

MARY. Well, I think Miss Devereaux might listen to reason. And she'd make a very beautiful mother for your children.

WINTERGREEN. Will you stop saying beautiful? I don't know anything about these girls, any of them. What kind of wives they'd make—whether they could sew, or make a bed, or cook. They don't look as though they'd ever had a skillet in their hands. Say, what *is* a skillet?

MARY. You wouldn't have to worry about that in the White House. They have plenty of servants there.

WINTERGREEN. The White House—yeah, but some day we'll have to move out of the White House. Then what? The Old Presidents' Home? There'll be no servants there. She'll *have* to cook.

MARY. Then she'll cook. And like it.

WINTERGREEN. But will *I* like it? Why, the average girl today can't cook—she can't even broil an egg.

MARY. Nonsense! Every girl can cook.

WINTERGREEN (*scornfully*). Every girl can cook—can *you*?

MARY. I certainly can!

WINTERGREEN. Then what are you doing here?

MARY (*right back at him*). I'm holding down a job! And I can cook, and sew, and make lace curtains, and bake the best darned corn muffins you ever ate! And what do you know about that?

WINTERGREEN. Did you say corn muffins?

MARY. Yes, corn muffins!

WINTERGREEN. Corn muffins! You haven't got one on you, have you?

MARY. I haven't far to go. (*Opens a drawer in her desk*) It's lunch, but you can have it.

WINTERGREEN. Oh, I couldn't do that!

MARY. Please! (*As he reaches*) The second from the left is a corn muffin. That's an apple.

WINTERGREEN (*taking muffin*). Well! You must let me take *you to lunch some day*. (*Samples it*) Why—it melts in the mouth! It's—it's marvelous.

MARY. And I'm the only person in the world who can make them without corn.

WINTERGREEN. What a muffin! Say, I don't even know your name.

MARY. That's right—you don't.

WINTERGREEN. Mine's Wintergreen.

MARY. I know. Mine's Turner.

WINTERGREEN. Just Turner?

MARY. Mary Turner.

WINTERGREEN (*suddenly*). Say, why in God's name didn't you get into this contest?

MARY. One of the three million?

WINTERGREEN. Well, you know what the first prize is?

MARY. Yeah, can you imagine?

WINTERGREEN. And you get your picture in the paper.

MARY. Having tea on the lawn with the Filipino delegation. And you throwing the medicine ball at the cabinet.

WINTERGREEN. Oh, do we have to have a cabinet?

MARY. What would you throw the medicine ball at? Me?

WINTERGREEN (*suddenly sobered*). Gosh, it'd be fun with you. We could have a grand time.

MARY (*the Southern accent*). Why, Mr. Wintergreen—

WINTERGREEN. No, I mean it! Listen—I've only got a minute—maybe less than that! I love you! I know it's awful sudden, but in a minute it'll be too late! Let's elope—let's get out of here!

MARY. But—but wait a minute! You don't know me!

WINTERGREEN. I know you better than those girls! (*A gesture*) You can make corn muffins, and—you're darned cute-looking, and—I love you!

MARY. But I don't know *you*!

WINTERGREEN. What's there to know? I'm young, I'm a swell conversationalist, and I've got a chance to be President! And besides that you love me!

MARY. But it's absurd! Why, you can't—

WINTERGREEN. The hell I can't! (*He seizes her and starts kissing her*) It's fate. Mary, that's what it is—fate! (*Kisses her again*) Why, we were meant for each other—you and me!

MARY. You and *I*!

WINTERGREEN. All right, you and I!

[*A burst of music. The sound of many voices as the doors are thrown open.*
Enter FULTON and the COMMITTEE, full of importance.]

FULTON (*sings*). As the chairman of the committee,
I announce we've made our choice;
Ev'ry lover from Dubuque to Jersey City
Should rejoice!

COMMITTEE. We rejoice!
When the angels up there designed her,
They designed a thoroughbred;
And on March the Fourth the President will find her
Worthy of his board and bed.

FULTON. And now it thrills me to introduce the rarest of American beauties,
the future first lady of the land—a fit consort for the ruler of our country.
Gentlemen—Miss Diana Devereaux!

[*DIANA appears, a golden crown on her head, followed by all the other GIRLS.*]

ALL. How beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!
How utterly, utterly so!
The charming, the gracious, the dutiful
Diana Devereaux.

FULTON. The committee will now tell why she was chosen—with music!

ALL. Never was there a girl so fair;
Never was there a form so rare;

DIANA. I could throw my arms right around your neck!

ALL. A voice so lyrical
Is given few;
Her eyes a miracle
Of Prussian blue;
Ruby lips and a foot so small;
As for hips—she has none at all!

What a charming epiglottis!
What a lovely coat of tan!
Oh, the man who isn't hot is
Not a man!

She's a bargain to whom she's wed;
More than worthy his board and bed!

FULTON. Says the chairman of the committee,
Let the newsmen now come in.

(*To DIANA*) For the sound reels you must look your best, my pretty.
Have the interviews begin!

COMMITTEE. We shall go and bring them in!

WINTERGREEN. Stop! No!
Though this may be a blow,
I simply cannot marry
Diana Devereaux!

ALL. What's this? What's this?
He says he cannot marry
Diana Devereaux!

COMMITTEE. You mean you will not marry
Diana Devereaux!

WINTERGREEN. Please understand—it isn't that I would jilt or spurn 'er:
It's just that I love someone else.

ALL. Who?

WINTERGREEN (*reprovingly*). Whom! . . . Mary Turner.

ALL. The man is mad!
Or else a cad!
He'll have to take her—
He can't forsake her!

DIANA. This jilting me,
It cannot be!
This lousy action
Calls for retraction!

COMMITTEE. We must know why
You should prefer
Instead of Di
A girl like her.

GIRLS. Yes, tell us why
You should prefer
Instead of Di
A girl like her.

WINTERGREEN. All that I can say of Mary Turner
Is that I love Mary Turner.

COMMITTEE. What's to be done?
Though she has won,
Though she is signed up,
He's made his mind up!
His love he'd rather
Give to the other.
What shall we do now?
What is our cue now?

DIANA. He will do nothing of the sort;
First we'll settle this thing in court.
(To WINTERGREEN) You seem to think Miss Turner hits the spot;
But what has she got that I haven't got?

ALL. Yes, what has *she* got that *she* hasn't got!

WINTERGREEN. My Mary makes corn muffins!

(To DIANA) Can *you* make corn muffins?

ALL. She can't make corn muffins!

WINTERGREEN. Some girls can bake a pie,
Made up of prunes and quinces;
Some make an oyster fry—
Others are good at blintzes.
Some lovely girls have done
Wonders with turkey stuffin's,
But I have found the one
Who can really make corn muffins.

[*He passes muffins to the COMMITTEE.*]

DIANA. Who cares about corn muffins? All I demand is justice!

COMMITTEE. Corn muffins—

Though other girls are good at turkey stuffin's,
She takes the cake, for she can bake corn muffins

Corn muffins—

He's not to blame for falling if she's able
To serve them at his table.

[*The COMMITTEE samples the muffins, and is overwhelmed.*]

Great, great!

It really must be fate!

We must declare these muffins

The best we ever ate!

ALL. There's none but Mary Turner
Could ever be his mate!

There's none but Mary Turner
Could ever be his mate!

Let's all rejoice!

[*One and all, with the exception of DIANA, they burst into a joyous dance, expressing the ecstasy that is theirs at the very existence of so remarkable a young woman. On this paean of joy the curtain falls.*]

ACT ONE—SCENE FOUR

Madison Square Garden—the height of the campaign. One sees first the outside of the Garden, and across it a great banner bearing the pictures of WINTERGREEN and MARY TURNER. WOO WITH WINTERGREEN, the slogan now runs, and beneath it: LOVERS! VOTE FOR JOHN AND MARY! Of MR. THROTTLEBOTTOM, or whatever his name is, there is just no mention at all.

A band plays. Drawn by the ballyhoo, a crowd gathers and goes gayly into the Garden, singing and cheering.

Inside the Garden, then, with the proceedings in full swing. A Garden that is packed to the rafters with cheering humanity, alive with cold-drink vendors, and hot dog salesmen, and everything that goes with so great an occasion. Over the rostrum there hangs the inevitable loud speaker, set in a cluster of lights that send a concentrated glow down on the platform. The various committeemen occupy the platform seats, and the two centre chairs are conspicuously empty, obviously waiting for the stellar pair. When the scene starts FULTON is in the midst of an impassioned address.

FULTON. . . . seventeen hundred and seventy-six, eighteen hundred and twelve, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, eighteen hundred and ninety-eight, and nineteen hundred and seventeen! (*There is loud applause as he stops for a sip of water*) And so, my friends, on Tuesday next yours is a great privilege. You will cast your ballot for the greatest cause and the greatest emotion known to the heart of mankind! Love! (*Applause.*) Yes, my good friends, for love! For love and for the greatest of all lovers! John P. Wintergreen! (*He sits down to great applause.*)

LOUD SPEAKER (*through the cluster of megaphones that hangs overhead*). Attention, please! Next Wednesday night: Jack Sharkey, American champion of the world, versus Max Schmeling, German champion of the world, for the championship of the world! (*Applause.*)

FULTON (*again to his feet*). And, my friends, as a good American, I believe that Jack Sharkey will win! (*Applause; he sits.*)

LOUD SPEAKER. Attention, please! Message for Dr. Hugo Kristmacher! Dr. Kristmacher! Your wife just telephoned the box-office and says not to come home tonight. (*Applause.*)

FULTON. And now, my good people, it is my great pleasure and privilege to introduce a man who has served his country long and gloriously, a man who has for many years waged a great and single-handed fight for what he considered his own interests. The silver-tongued orator of the golden West, Senator Carver Crockett Jones! (*Applause.*)

[SENATOR JONES rises.]

LOUD SPEAKER. Attention, please! While Senator Jones is speaking you will be entertained by the world's greatest wrestlers, Vladimir Vidovitch, the Har-

lem Heaven, and Yussef Yussevitch, the Terrible Turk, in a match for the world's championship.

[*Two ATTENDANTS dash out and quickly unroll a mat. Then enter, from opposite sides, VIDOVITCH and YUSSEVITCH. As they reach the arena they drop their bathrobes and stand revealed as great three-hundred pounders, with arms like tree trunks. There is the sound of a gong. Simultaneously the WRESTLERS go into action and SENATOR JONES starts his speech.*]

JONES. My friends! We have arrived at a great moment in our history. Magnificent though our past has been, it dwindles into utter insignificance beside the brilliance of our future destiny. Gaze into that future, my friends, and what do you see? What do you see? (*At this moment what one chiefly sees is the rear elevation of VIDOVITCH, which is being stared at by something akin to admiration by YUSSEVITCH.*) There it is, my friends, for all the world to envy. (*The WRESTLERS reverse, and it is now YUSSEVITCH that is starred. They break, and resume wrestling as JONES resumes talking.*) Not for us the entangling alliances of Europe, not for us the allying entanglements of Asia. (*A burst of applause. The WRESTLERS, at the moment, have a complicated double scissors hold on each other, but their arms are free. Pausing in their labors, they join in the applause.*) Here then we stand, alone in our strength, solitary in our splendor, the greatest and most glorious country that God Almighty put upon earth—the United States of AMERICA!!! (*The WRESTLERS, relinquishing a complicated hold, jump to their feet and salute. The CROWD bursts into applause.*) And so, my friends— (*One of the WRESTLERS makes a sensational dive for the other's legs, throwing him to the mat with a crash. The CROWD sets up a cheering and yelling, egging on the WRESTLERS. The COMMITTEEMEN sitting behind JONES crowd to the edge of the rail to look on; the whole CROWD is on its feet. JONES tries bravely to talk against this for a moment, but his own interest in the WRESTLERS finally gets the better of him. He joins the cheerers. It all comes to a climax as one of the men finally gets the other down. Cheers. Applause. Bows. The WRESTLERS exit; the ATTENDANTS roll up the mat; the CROWD settles back.*)

FULTON. And now, my friends, while we are waiting for our beloved candidate— (*There is a hullabaloo at the entrance—the sound of a scuffle, voices, etc. The CROWD gets to its feet as the noise mounts. Enter THROTTLEBOTTOM, trying to fight off four POLICEMEN and a couple of Garden ATTENDANTS. As he comes into view it is seen that he is practically in tatters, his coat off, his collar askew. He struggles to the foot of the platform stairs.*) Here, here, here! What's all this? Who is this man? Stop that noise! What is this? (*The noise quiets down. The POLICEMEN stand holding tightly onto THROTTLEBOTTOM, two to each arm. Behind him stand the Garden ATTENDANTS, one of whom has picked up a huge iron bar somewhere.*) What is all this? What do you want here?

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*tears himself loose and gets half-way up the steps*). But wait, wait! I'm Throttlebottom! I'm the vice-president. Here—look! I'm Throttlebottom! (*Takes a banner from his pocket and unrolls it. Sure enough, it reads: For Vice-President: Alexander Throttlebottom.*)

FULTON. Oh, yes! Yes! It's all right, officers. This man is all right!

[THROTTLEBOTTOM gets up on the platform. The other COMMITTEEMEN come forward to greet him, but not too cordially. THROTTLEBOTTOM, meanwhile, is trying to get his clothes together, stuffing his shirt into his trousers, getting his collar back on.]

FULTON. What are you doing here? Why didn't you stay in your cave?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. The other hermits objected.

FULTON (at the rostrum, reluctantly). My friends, we have an unexpected surprise for you. It is your great and rare privilege to hear a few words from— (THROTTLEBOTTOM prompts him) Alexander Throttlebottom— (He pronounces the name with great care) candidate for— (THROTTLEBOTTOM prompts him again, first looking at the banner himself) vice-president. (Then, as an afterthought) Of the United States of America. (The CROWD is silent.)

[THROTTLEBOTTOM advances to the rostrum; takes his speech from his pocket. It unrolls all the way to the ground, turning out to be about ten feet long. A pleased expression spreads over his face; recognition is his at last.]

LOUD SPEAKER (just as THROTTLEBOTTOM opens his mouth to speak) Attention, please! At the end of the first period in Montreal: Boston Bruins, 3; Chicago White Sox, 1. (The machine clanks off; THROTTLEBOTTOM again gets ready to speak. Once more a slow smile comes over his face.) Attention, please! There will now be an intermission of fifteen minutes. (There is a great pushing back of chairs; everybody gets up and starts to leave.)

THROTTLEBOTTOM. No, no, no! No!

[The various noises merge into a greater and growing noise. Cries of "Wintergreen!" "Here comes Wintergreen!" Flashlights. Cheering. Music. Enter WINTERGREEN and MARY TURNER, preceded by POLICEMEN. To the accompaniment of cheers and handshaking they advance to the platform and go up the stairs. There is a great shaking of hands with the COMMITTEEMEN. THROTTLEBOTTOM, as the presidential procession gets up onto the platform, is simply pushed right out of the way by the POLICEMEN, and practically falls down the stairs on the other side. Here he is met by other POLICEMEN, and is ignominiously dragged out of the place, kicking and protesting. Meanwhile, as the noise subsides, WINTERGREEN and MARY take their seats, and FULTON advances to the rostrum to introduce them.]

FULTON (stilling the tumult with upraised hand). No need to tell you who the next speakers will be. They are the most beloved couple in America today, the most beloved couple that have ever run for the highest office in the gift of the American people. There have been many great lovers in history. But Romeo never loved Juliet, Dante never loved Beatrice, Damon never loved Pythias, as John P. Wintergreen loves Mary Turner. (Applause) My friends, the issue of this campaign is a simple one. We do not talk to you about war debts or wheat immigration—we appeal to your hearts, not your intelligence. It is the old, old story, yet ever new—the sweetest story ever told. John P. Wintergreen, candidate for President of the United States of America, loves Mary Turner. Mary Turner, the most beautiful, the loveliest example of typi-

cal American womanhood—and I defy our opponents to say otherwise—loves John P. Wintergreen. He has proposed to her in 47 States of the Union, and in 47 States she has accepted him. Tonight she will give him her answer in the great Empire State of New York! John and Mary, stand up! (*They do so*) Can you look at them and not be thrilled by their youth, their charm, their passion? Ladies and gentlemen, I give you John P. Wintergreen and Mary Turner!

[FULTON *sits down as pandemonium breaks loose. WINTERGREEN and MARY come forward; the tumult slowly dies.*]

WINTERGREEN. My friends, I come before you in this final rally of the campaign not as John P. Wintergreen the candidate, not as John P. Wintergreen the statesman, but as a simple man in love. So I beg you to bear with me for a moment, while I ask the girl of my dreams if she will be my heart's delight. (*There is applause as he turns to MARY.*) Miss Turner, there has been something on my mind for a long, long time.

MARY. Yes, Mr. Wintergreen?

WINTERGREEN (*the hesitant lover*). May I not call you—Mary?

MARY. I wish you would—John.

WINTERGREEN. Do you remember that night we first walked together, on the boardwalk in Atlantic City?

MARY. With the moon shining overhead?

WINTERGREEN. And the lights rippling on the water. Do you remember what I said to you, Mary, as I took your dear hand in mine?

MARY. You said— (*she drops her eyes*) that I reminded you of your mother, who had been dead these many years.

WINTERGREEN. And in the cornfields of Kansas, on the plains of Arizona, in the mountains of Nebraska, I whispered to you how much you were beginning to mean to me.

MARY. Our friendship has been a wonderful thing to me.

WINTERGREEN. And in the cave in Kentucky—(*Two PHOTOGRAPHERS dash on. WINTERGREEN stops until picture is taken*)—when you were frightened of the darkness, I put my arm around your trembling shoulder and drew you to me.

MARY. You were so brave, so strong.

WINTERGREEN. Mary, I can conceal it from you no longer. Look at me, darling. (*He tilts her face up*) I love you. (*The CROWD breaks into great cheers and applause. WINTERGREEN stops them with a gesture*) Yes, Mary, I love you. (*A gesture to halt applause that has not come.*)

MARY. Why, John! I hardly know what to say.

WINTERGREEN. Say that you love me, Mary, and that you will be mine.

MARY. I do love you, John.

[*Applause. The CROWD on its feet. WINTERGREEN again checks them.*]

WINTERGREEN. And if I am elected President, you will marry me?

MARY (*with simple determination*). I will.

WINTERGREEN (*turns quickly to the crowd, his arm still around MARY*). Citizens, it is up to you! Can you let this glorious romance end unhappily!

MARY. Can you tear asunder two loving hearts whom God hath joined together!

WINTERGREEN. I put my faith and trust in the American people! Go then to the polls on Tuesday and show the whole world that the United States of America stands first, last and always for Love! Are you with me?

ALL (*on their feet*). YES!

FULTON. Sing 'em the campaign song, Jack! Sing the campaign love song!

WINTERGREEN. Of thee I sing, baby,
 Summer, autumn, winter, spring, baby,
 You're my silver lining,
 You're my sky of blue,
 There's a love light shining,
 All because of you.
 Of thee I sing, baby,
 You have got that certain thing, baby,
 Shining star and inspiration,
 Worthy of a mighty nation,
 Of thee I sing!

[*The CROWD yells itself blue in the face. When they are good and blue, the curtain falls.*]

ACT ONE—SCENE FIVE

Election Night. The roar of the CROWD, the blowing of horns, the tooting of sirens. A band that plays furiously. The voice of a nation is speaking, and the results are being thrown upon a motion picture screen. Faster and faster they come—bulletins from here, there, and everywhere; photographs of the candidate, photographs of MARY TURNER, photographs of people that have nothing to do with anything. And returns, returns, returns:

WHITESIDE, VERMONT

Indications are that Wintergreen has swept the town by a plurality of 154.

WATERVILLE, MASS.

Early returns show Wintergreen well ahead.

First election district gives:

Wintergreen	12
Scattering	1

A Picture of John P. Wintergreen.

A Picture of Mary Turner.

D R A M A

ATLANTA, GA.

16 election districts out of 184 give:
 Wintergreen 12,736
 Jefferson Davis 1,653

NEW YORK, N. Y.

126 election districts report:
 Wintergreen 72,639
 Bryan 128
 Absent 4
 Late 2

A Picture of Mary Turner.

A Picture of Wintergreen.

A Picture of George Washington, of all people.

LANDSLIDE, NEB.

John P. Wintergreen 12,538
 A Man Named Wilkins 1

A Picture of Patrick Henry.

HOLLYWOOD, CAL.

Wintergreen 160,000
 Mickey Mouse 159,000
 Gloria Swanson's First Husband .. 84,638

John P. Wintergreen Casting Ballot No. 8 at Public School 63 at 6:05 o'clock this morning.

[And a picture of him doing so.]

John P. Wintergreen Casting Ballot No. 168 at Public School 145 at 8:10 o'clock this morning and 2:25 this afternoon.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

Alexander Throttlebottom, vice-presidential candidate, gets his shoes shined preparatory to entering election booth.

[But one sees only the feet.]

A Picture of The White House.

Wintergreen again.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

8 Rubbers Out of 150 give:

Culbertson	300
Lenz	200
Grand Slam	1000
Vulnerable	1500

More pictures:

Benjamin Franklin.

Babe Ruth. (*Just for good measure.*)

NEW YORK, N. Y.

41 Election Districts give:

Wintergreen	46,572
Walter Hampden	136
Mae West	82

LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Wintergreen	27,637
Light Wines and Beer	14
Straight Whiskey	1,850,827

Pictures again:

John P. Wintergreen.

Patrick Henry.

Primo Carnera.

Man O' War.

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

Wintergreen	14,653
King George	3
Queen Mary	1

ROME, ITALY

127 Election Districts give:

Wintergreen	0
Mussolini	828,638

NEW YORK, N. Y.

Empire State gives Wintergreen plurality of 1,627,535, with only three counties missing.

LATER

Three missing New York counties located by Pinkerton men in Northeast Nebraska.

More pictures:
George Washington.
The Marx Brothers.

NEW YORK, N. Y.	
First Returns from Wall St. give:	
Wintergreen	192,000
Radio	5 ³ / ₄
Goldman, Sachs	2 ¹ / ₈

And still more pictures:
The White House.
The Capitol.
The Roxy.
Roxy Himself.
A Friend of Roxy's.
An Unidentified Man (*who looks suspiciously like the vice-presidential candidate*).

MACY'S BASEMENT	
Wintergreen	\$1.50 97¢
(Only one to a customer)	

RICHMOND, VA.	
Wintergreen	98,728
Mason	499
Dixon	1
Mason & Dixon	500

ST. LOUIS, MO.				R	H	E
Cardinals	. 000	010	000	1	4	1
Giants 000	000	002	2	5	0

All returns indicate that
Wintergreen is sweeping
Country!

Wintergreen lacks
only four votes
to win!

WINTERGREEN
CASTS LAST
FOUR VOTES!

WINTERGREEN ELECTED!

Our Next President!
(*A beaming picture of WINTERGREEN.*)

Our Next First Lady!
(*MISS TURNER at her gayest.*)

BULLETIN

At a late hour tonight the defeated candidate sent the following telegram to John P. Wintergreen, the winner:

"Heartily congratulate you on your splendid victory and charge fraud in Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska, Montana, Washington, Ohio and Massachusetts."

BULLETIN

At midnight tonight Alexander Throttlebottom refused to concede his election as Vice-President.

NEXT WEEK
NORMA SHEARER
in
"THE LOVE GIRL"

And, to finish off, the Metro-Goldwyn lion. It opens its mouth. It crows.

(CURTAIN)

ACT ONE—SCENE SIX

On the steps of the Capitol, Washington, D. C. It is Inauguration Day, and the scene is one of flashing uniforms and surging crowds. Except for a cleared space in which the all-important ceremony is to take place—two ceremonies, as a matter of fact—the steps are packed with diplomats, Army and Navy attachés, Cabinet members, Senators, Congressmen and anyone else who could get a ticket. As background for all this there looms the Capitol itself, with the great dome polishing it all off.

A hush falls on the crowd. The proceedings are about to begin.

Enter, to music, the nine judges of the Supreme Court of the United States—wrapped in their black robes, and all looking astonishingly like a certain Chief Justice who shall be nameless.

The JUDGES sing.

And a parting kiss for May;
 Toodle-oo, good-bye! This is my wedding day!
 Here's a final smile for Della,
 And the lady known as Lou;
 Toodle-oo, good-bye! With bach'lor days I'm through!
 [*And the girls in question, believe it or not, parade tantalizingly by him.*]
 Though I really never knew them,
 It's a rule I must obey;
 I am singing good-bye to them
 In the customary way.
 My regards to Arabella,
 And to Emmaline and Kay;
 Toodle-oo, dear girls, good-bye; This is my wedding day!

ALL. He is toodle-ooing all his lady loves,
 All the girls he didn't know so well;
 All the innocent and all the shady loves—
 Oh, dinga donga dell!

Bride and groom! Their future should be glorious;
 What a happy story they will tell!
 Let the welkin now become uproarious—
 Oh, dinga donga, dinga donga dell!

[*On a platform at the head of the stairs, as if by magic, there appears MARY TURNER, gorgeous in bridal attire.*]

Clear the way!
 Hail the bride!
 Sweet and Gay—
 Here comes the bride!

MARY. Is it true or am I dreaming?
 Do I go to Heav'n to stay?
 Never was a girl so happy on her wedding day!

CHIEF JUSTICE. Do you, John P. Wintergreen, solemnly swear to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America and to love, honor and cherish this woman so long as you two shall live?

WINTERGREEN. I do.

CHIEF JUSTICE. Do you, Mary Turner, promise to love, honor and cherish this man so long as you two shall live?

MARY. I do.

CHIEF JUSTICE. Therefore, by virtue of the power that is vested in me as Chief Justice, I hereby pronounce you President of the United States, man and wife.

WINTERGREEN. Mary!

MARY. John!

[*They embrace; the CROWD yells its head off.*]

WINTERGREEN AND MARY.

Is it true or am I dreaming?

Do I go to Heav'n to stay?

Never was a girl so happy on her wedding—

[*Enter, of all people, DIANA DEVEREAUX. And is she annoyed?*]

DIANA. Stop! Halt! Pause! Wait!

ALL. Who is this intruder?
There's no one could be ruder!
What's your silly notion
In causing this commotion?

DIANA (*recitative, and with highly operatic interludes*). I was the most beautiful blossom in all the Southland. I was sent up North to enter the contest, with the understanding that the winner was to be the President's wife. The committee examined me. My lily white body fascinated them. I was chosen. It was the happiest moment of my life.

ALL. Yes, yes, go on! Yes, yes, go on!

DIANA. Suddenly the sky fell—suddenly for no reason at all, no reason at all, this man rejected me. All my castles came tumbling down. And so I am serving him with a summons—for breach of promise!

ALL. What! What!
The water's getting hot!
She says he made a promise—
A promise he forgot!

DIANA. It's true! It's true!

CHIEF JUSTICE. The day he's getting married,
You put him on the spot!

ALL. It's dirty work of Russia—
A communistic plot!

WINTERGREEN.

Please understand! It wasn't that I would jilt or spurn 'er;

It's just that there was someone else!

ALL. Whom?

WINTERGREEN (*correcting them*). Who! Mary Turner!

CHIEF JUSTICE. We're having fits!

The man admits
This little sinner
Was really winner!

DIANA. I couldn't see
His jilting me,
And so I'm doing
A bit of suing.

ALL. And if it's true she has a claim
You should be called a dirty name!

Yes, if it's true, she has a claim
Then you're a dirty, dirty name!

MARY. John, no matter what they do to hurt you,
The one you love won't desert you.

DIANA. I'm a queen who has lost her king:
Why should she wear the wedding ring?

WINTERGREEN. Some girls can bake a pie,
Made up of prunes and quinces,
Some make an oyster fry—
Others are good at blintzes.
Some lovely girls have done
Wonders with turkey stuffin's,
But I have found the one
Who can really make corn muffins!

ALL. Yes, he has found the one
Who can really make corn muffins.

DIANA. Who cares about corn muffins? All I demand is justice!

WINTERGREEN AND MARY. Which is more important—corn muffins or justice?

ALL. Which is more important—corn muffins or justice?

CHIEF JUSTICE. If you will wait a moment—you'll have our decision. Forty—
seven—eleven—

[*The JUSTICES leap into a football huddle. After a moment they resume their positions.*]

CHIEF JUSTICE. The decision of the Supreme Court is—corn muffins!

ALL. Great! Great!
It's written on the slate!
There's none but Mary Turner
Could ever be his mate!

DIANA. It's I, not Mary Turner
Who should have been his mate;
I'm off to tell my story
In ev'ry single state!

CHIEF JUSTICE. Be off with you, young woman,
He's married to his mate!
Be off with you, young woman,
He's married to his mate!

[*DIANA goes, but she'll be heard from again.*]

ALL. There's none but Mary Turner
Could ever be his mate!
There's none but Mary Turner
Could ever be his mate!

WINTERGREEN.

Of thee I sing, baby,
 Summer, autumn, winter, spring, baby—
 Shining star and inspiration,
 Worthy of a mighty nation,
 Of thee I sing!

CURTAIN

ACT TWO—SCENE ONE

The President's office, in the White House. And not only the President's office, but the President's wife's office, too. There are several indications of this joint occupancy. The Presidential desk, for example, is divided into two sections—one piled high with various state papers, and the other lined with perfumes, powders, and the other perquisites of femininity. Great portraits of George and Martha Washington look down from on high; the governmental eagle adorns the curtains.

The same JENKINS who used to work for MR. FULTON is now secretary to the PRESIDENT, and with Mrs. Wintergreen's secretary, MISS BENSON, he is hard at work when the curtain rises. Enter, to music, about two dozen more SECRETARIES. They all get together in a little song and dance—an old White House custom:

Oh, it's great to be a secret'ry
 In the White House, D. C.
 You get inside information on Algeria:
 You know ev'ry move they're making in Liberia.
 You learn what's what and what is not
 In the land of the free.
 Ev'ry corner that you turn you meet a notable
 With a statement that is eminently quotable—
 Oh, it's great to be a secret'ry
 In the White House, D. C.

[A White House GUIDE enters, followed by a crowd of SIGHTSEERS. They are plainly from the country—men with loosely wrapped umbrellas, women with waistlines not in the right place, and a terrible child or two.]

GUIDE. And this, ladies and gentlemen, is the executive office. This is the room in which the President discharges his official duties, and has been occupied by every President since Hoover. On your right stands the famous double desk used by the President and Mrs. Wintergreen in administering the affairs of the country. During the 1912 coal shortage this room was used as a garage. Right this way, please. We are now entering the room from which, on an historic occasion, the Spanish Ambassador jumped out of the window, in the very nick of time. Here the diplomatic corps gathers once a month to pay its formal respects to the Chief Executive, and here too the cabinet assembles when— *(The last SIGHTSEER is through the door.)*

[The telephone on the desk rings.]

JENKINS. Hello. . . . Who? . . . No, the Coolidges don't live here any more!

MISS BENSON (*holding a perfume bottle up to the light*). Mrs. Wintergreen is running low on Chanel No. 5.

JENKINS (*consulting a schedule*). Looks like a pretty full day. (*Reads*) Delegation from South America—

MISS BENSON. What's eating them?

JENKINS. Usual thing. Want Hollywood cleaned up. (*Looking at list*) Delegation of Camisole Indians—they want scalping restored. Committee of cotton manufacturers—that's for Mrs. Wintergreen. They want her to bring back cotton stockings.

MISS BENSON. Oh, they do, eh?

JENKINS. Mayors of fourteen American cities— (*Another SECRETARY enters with newspaper clippings*) Well?

SECRETARY. Morning editorials.

[*He goes. JENKINS looks the clippings over; shakes his head.*]

MISS BENSON. What's the matter?

JENKINS. Same thing. They're still harping on it.

MISS BENSON. You mean Devereaux?

JENKINS (*as he reads*). Mm.

MISS BENSON. What's it say?

JENKINS. Nothing new. They just think she got a raw deal.

MISS BENSON. A lot of people think that.

JENKINS (*crumpling a clipping*). Just as well if he doesn't see this one. You know, it wouldn't surprise me a bit—

[*Another SECRETARY enters.*]

SECRETARY. Mr. Jenkins—

JENKINS. Yes?

SECRETARY. Those people are here now. Can you see them?

JENKINS. Show them into the Blue Room.

SECRETARY. Yes, sir. (*Goes.*)

JENKINS. Want to come along? Delegation from the Virgin Islands.

MISS BENSON. Well, well! And what are they after?

JENKINS. They want their name changed. They claim it's hurting business. [*They go, as another GUIDE enters with a sightseeing party. A SAILOR or two.*

A SWEDE. A DUTCHMAN.]

GUIDE. Right this way, please—follow me. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the executive office. It is in this room that the President signs the many laws that govern your every-day life, and from which he controls the various departmental activities. (*One of the SIGHTSEERS emerges a bit from the crowd, eagerly taking in the scene. He turns out to be, of all people, ALEXANDER THROTTLEBOTTOM.*) Here come the various heads of government for daily consultation with the Executive, and to receive from him the benefit of his wide experience. It is in this room— (*To THROTTLEBOTTOM, who has strayed a little too far from the group*) I beg your pardon, sir, but would you please stay over there with the others? You see, we're personally responsible in case anything is stolen.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*meekly rejoining the group*). Yes, sir.

GUIDE (*opens door*). Thank you. (*Resuming his formal tone*) Now, are there any questions?

A SIGHTSEER. Does the President live here all year round?

GUIDE. All year round. Except when Congress is in session.

SIGHTSEER. Where does the vice-president live?

GUIDE. Who?

SIGHTSEER. The vice-president. Where does he live?

GUIDE (*taking a little red book out of his pocket*). Just one moment, please. Vice regent, viceroy, vice societies— I'm sorry, but he doesn't seem to be in here.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*so mildly*). I can tell you about that.

GUIDE. What?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I know where the vice-president lives.

GUIDE. Where?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. He lives at 1448 Z Street.

GUIDE. Well, that's very interesting. He has a house there, has he?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, he lives there.

GUIDE. All by himself?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. No, with the boarders. It's an awfully good place. Mrs. Spiegelbaum's. It's a great place, if you like Kosher cooking.

GUIDE. Think of your knowing all that! Are you a Washingtonian?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, I've been here since March 4. I came down for the inauguration, but I lost my ticket.

GUIDE. You don't say? Well! First time you've been to the White House?

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*nods*). I didn't know people were allowed in.

GUIDE. You seem to know the vice-president pretty well. What kind of fellow is he?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. He's all right. He's a nice fellow when you get to know him, but nobody wants to know him.

GUIDE. What's the matter with him?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. There's nothing the matter with him. Just vice-president.

GUIDE. Well, what does he do all the time?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. He sits around in the parks, and feeds the pigeons, and takes walks, and goes to the movies. The other day he was going to join the library, but he had to have two references, so he couldn't get in.

GUIDE. But when does he do all his work?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. What work?

SIGHTSEER. Doesn't he preside over the Senate?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. What?

GUIDE. Sure he does! That's the vice-president's job.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. What is?

GUIDE. To preside over the Senate.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Over what?

GUIDE. The Senate. You know what Senators are, don't you?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Sure—I saw them play yesterday.

GUIDE. No, no! The vice-president presides over the Senate. It meets in the Capitol.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. When does it?

GUIDE. Right now! It's going on now!

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*frenzied*). How do you get there?

GUIDE. The Capitol?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Yeah!

GUIDE. Street car at the door—right up Pennsylvania Avenue.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*hurrying out*). Street car at the door—right up Pennsylv—
(*Turns back*) What's the name of that place?

GUIDE. The Senate!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. The Senate! (*He dashes out.*)

GUIDE. Right this way, please. (*Opens door*) Here the diplomatic corps gathers monthly to pay its formal respects to the Chief Executive, and here too the cabinet assembles upon the occasion of its weekly meetings—

[*They go. In the distance there is a fanfare of trumpets; JENKINS and MISS BENSON enter and take their places at the Presidential chairs. Enter, then, the PRESIDENT and MARY.*]

WINTERGREEN. }
MARY. } Good morning!

JENKINS. }
MISS BENSON. } Good morning!

[WINTERGREEN looks out the window, through which is visible the panorama of Washington, with Washington's Monument prominent in the foreground.]

WINTERGREEN. What a country—what a country! Jenkins, what monument is that?

JENKINS (*promptly*). Grant's Tomb.

WINTERGREEN. Oh, yes. Well, what's on the schedule this morning? Ah, here we are! (*Takes up some letters*) Tell the Secretary of the Navy to scrap two battleships.

JENKINS. What?

WINTERGREEN. Scrap two and build four. Disarmament.

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN. Cablegram to the President of San Domingo: "Congratulations on beginning your second day in office. That's five I owe you, and will bet you double or nothing on tomorrow."

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN. Tell the Secretary of War to stand ready to collect that bet.

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN. Letter to the Friars' Club, 48th St., New York City. "Dear Brother Friars: Regret very much I cannot take part in this year's minstrel show. Owing to conditions in the South, I do not think it would be wise for me to black up." (*Looks through the pile of letters*) I get the lousiest mail for a President!

MARY. Emily! Take a cablegram to the Queen of Roumania.

MISS BENSON. Yes, ma'am.

MARY. Queen of Roumania. "Dear Marie: I have been trying out that new soap you are selling, and I predict an even greater success for it than you had with the shaving cream. Jack joins me in sending love. Do write and tell us all about Carol."

WINTERGREEN. And that French girl. . . . Jenkins!

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN. Take a memo to the Secretary of State: "Referring to last Tuesday night's poker game, please note that the Liberian minister's check for twelve dollars and forty-five cents has been returned for lack of funds. Kindly get a new minister for next Tuesday night's game, and add \$12.45 to the Liberian National Debt."

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN. Get the Governor of Maryland on the phone and ask him what horse he likes in the fourth at Pimlico.

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN (*brandishing a telephone bill*). And tell the telephone company that this is not my bill. (*Hands it to secretary*) That long distance call was March 3rd.

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN. Anybody in the ante-room?

JENKINS. Yes, sir. Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of Agriculture, and four zebras.

WINTERGREEN. Zebras?

JENKINS. There's a man who wants to give them to you.

WINTERGREEN (*thinking it over*). Well, I could use two.

[*A SECRETARY enters with a wooden board, covered with electric buttons. A long wire is attached to it.*]

JENKINS. All ready, Mr. President. Time to press a button.

WINTERGREEN. So early in the morning?

JENKINS. Opening of the International Corn Growing Exposition. Button No. 1. . . . Ready. . . . Press.

WINTERGREEN (*presses button, then laughs*). Say, Jenkins, I never will forget the time I reopened the Bank of United States by mistake. (*JENKINS beats a hasty retreat. The telephone rings*) Hello! (*Annoyed, hands the instrument to MARY*) For you!

MARY. Who is it?

WINTERGREEN. The butcher!

MARY. Hello! . . . Oh, good morning, Mr. Schneidermann. . . . Fine, thank you. . . . Now, let me see. What have you got that's good? . . . Well, we had lamp chops yesterday. . . . They *are*? Well, wait a minute. (*To WINTERGREEN*) John, who's coming to dinner tonight?

WINTERGREEN. What? Let me see—the Chief Justice, the Attorney General, Jackie Cooper, and those three judges that got paroled. That's six.

MARY (*as she returns to 'phone*). That's eight with us. . . . Hello, Mr. Schneidermann. Make it sixteen lamb chops—

WINTERGREEN. Wait a minute! What about that dirigible?

MARY. What?

WINTERGREEN. That dirigible from Germany. If that gets in we've got to have *them*.

MARY. Oh, dear! How many are there?

WINTERGREEN. Ah—sixty-four passengers, and of course two stowaways—that's sixty-six.

MARY. That's seventy-four in all.

WINTERGREEN. But they may not get here.

MARY. But when'll we know? . . . Just a minute, Mr. Schneidermann. (*Back to WINTERGREEN, pretty testily*) I've got to know whether they're going to get here.

WINTERGREEN. How do I know? Take a chance! You can always use lamb chops.

MARY (*back to 'phone, wearily*). Listen, Mr. Schneidermann. A hundred and forty-eight lamb chops. . . . That's right. . . . Now, how is your asparagus? . . . Well, make it a carload of asparagus, and about seventy-five loaves of rye bread. That's all, thank you.

JENKINS (*entering*). Beg pardon, sir. Another button.

WINTERGREEN. What's this? (*Reads*) Opening of a new speakeasy on 52d Street, New York. Didn't I open that yesterday?

JENKINS. Yes, sir. This is the re-opening. They closed it last night. (*He goes.*)

MARY (*coming to WINTERGREEN with a stack of bills in her hand*). John, look at these grocery bills!

WINTERGREEN. Well, what about it?

MARY. I've simply got to have a bigger allowance.

WINTERGREEN. Again! For God's sake, Mary!

MARY. Well, I can't help it. Fifty people to dinner every night. And Senators to breakfast every morning. It mounts up.

WINTERGREEN. I've got to have them! It's business!

MARY. Then you've got to give me enough to feed them.

WINTERGREEN. Where am I going to get it from?

MARY. Get it from! If you had any gumption you'd ask Congress for a raise.

WINTERGREEN. Ask Congress for a raise! I'm lucky they don't lay me off!

[JENKINS *enters*.]

JENKINS. I beg your pardon.

WINTERGREEN. It's all right. What is it?

JENKINS. The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Navy are still waiting.

WINTERGREEN. I forgot. Have them come in.

SECRETARY. The Secretary of Agriculture!

[*He enters. It turns out to be our old friend LIPPMAN.*]

LIPPMAN. Hello, Jack! Hello, Mary!

WINTERGREEN. Hello, Secretary!

SECRETARY. The Secretary of the Navy!

[*Enter GILHOOLEY. It seems that WINTERGREEN took care of the boys.*]

WINTERGREEN. Sit down, boys. Sorry I kept you waiting.

LIPPMAN. That's all right.

GILHOOLEY. O. K., Chief.

WINTERGREEN. Well, what's on your mind, Louis? How's agriculture?

LIPPMAN. That's what I came to talk to you about. Listen, Jack! I don't know anything about agriculture. I told you I wanted the Treasury.

WINTERGREEN. What's the matter with agriculture?

LIPPMAN. Agriculture's all right—it's those farmers. Wheat, wheat! All they know is raise wheat! And then they raise hell with me because nobody wants it.

WINTERGREEN. Why do you let them raise so much?

LIPPMAN. How can you stop 'em? I did all I could. I invited the seven-year-locusts, but they didn't come. Even the locusts don't want their lousy wheat. And they're always complaining about being in one place all the time—they want to travel.

GILHOOLEY. You call that trouble. How'd you like to have a lot of sailors on your neck?

WINTERGREEN. What do *they* want—*two* wives in every port?

GILHOOLEY. Yeah. And any port in a storm. And no storms. And they won't stand for those bells any more. They want to know what time it is the same as anybody else. But that's not the big thing.

WINTERGREEN. Well?

GILHOOLEY. It's the ocean. They don't like the ocean.

WINTERGREEN. Which ocean don't they like?

GILHOOLEY. All of them. They say it's a nice place to visit, but they don't want to live there. It's no place to bring up a family.

WINTERGREEN (*thinking it over*). The farmers want to travel and the sailors want to settle down. . . . I've got it! Have them change places!

LIPPMAN. What?

WINTERGREEN. It'll solve the whole problem! Sailors don't know anything about farming—in two years there won't *be* any wheat! You'll have a wheat shortage!

LIPPMAN. And I'll get hell again!

WINTERGREEN. And look what it does for business! You get the farmers on the boats; the traveling salesmen will come back to the farmhouses—you know, to stay over night! Why, I haven't heard a good story in years!

[*A SECRETARY enters.*]

SECRETARY. The Secretary of State!

[*He comes in. It is FULTON.*]

FULTON. Hello, boys. Everybody.

WINTERGREEN. How are you, Matty?

FULTON (*all business*). What are you doing, Jack? Important?

WINTERGREEN. Just chinning.

FULTON (*a look toward the doors*). Can you keep the room clear for a little while?

WINTERGREEN. Sure. What's up?

FULTON (*starts toward door*). Shall I tell 'em?

WINTERGREEN. No, here we are. (*Presses a buzzer.*)

LIPPMAN (*starting off*). See you later.

FULTON. No, no. Want you fellows to stay.

[JENKINS *enters.*]

WINTERGREEN. I don't want to be disturbed for a little while.

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

FULTON. Just a minute. When Senators Jones and Lyons get here, bring em in.

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

FULTON. And nobody else.

JENKINS. Yes, sir. What shall I do about the press conference?

FULTON. Have 'em wait! (JENKINS *goes*. FULTON *waits for the doors to close*.)
There's hell to pay!

WINTERGREEN. What's the matter?

FULTON. Devereaux!

MARY. John!

[*He puts an arm around her.*]

WINTERGREEN. What about her?

FULTON. The thing has been growing for weeks—you know that, boys—
(*This to LIPPMAN and GILHOOLEY.*)

WINTERGREEN. What has?

FULTON. Well, you know there's always been a certain bunch that said Devereaux didn't get a square deal.

WINTERGREEN. A handful of Southerners!

FULTON. At the beginning, yes. But now it's spreading all over the country!

WINTERGREEN. What do you mean?

MARY. What's happened?

FULTON. I'll tell you what I mean. Yesterday the Federation of New Jersey Woman's Clubs came out solid for Devereaux.

MARY. John! (*A sob from MARY.*)

FULTON. And this morning I got a petition from the Kansas City Elks—demanding Devereaux! And the same thing'll happen with the Moose and the Shriners!

[*Enter SENATORS JONES and LYONS.*]

[*A nod or two from the others.*]

FULTON. Good! I've just been telling the President how things stand!

JONES. Mr. President, I cannot overstate the case. The West is up in arms.

LYONS. The South, suh, is on fire!

JONES. Nebraska has just declared martial law! A posse has been formed!

LYONS. In Louisiana you have been hanged in effigy!

WINTERGREEN (*defiant*). How do the Philippines feel about it?

MARY. It's all my fault!

WINTERGREEN. No! I'd rather have you than Nebraska!

FULTON. It doesn't matter whose fault it is. We've got to do something. We've got to do something to counteract this Devereaux propaganda!

WINTERGREEN. I'll tell you what we'll do! (*Presses a buzzer*) We carried 48 States in the campaign, didn't we? Mary and I?

FULTON. Yeah!

WINTERGREEN. And there was Devereaux propaganda then! But we licked it before and we can do it again! (*As JENKINS enters*) Those newspapermen still out there?

JENKINS. Yes, sir.

WINTERGREEN. Bring 'em in when I ring!

JENKINS. Yes, sir. (*Goes.*)

WINTERGREEN. The trouble with you boys is you're yellow!

FULTON. Now look here!

WINTERGREEN. One sock and you're ready to quit! We've got to fight, that's all! I'm as good as I ever was! And so's Mary! And we still love each other! (*Turning to her*) Don't we?

MARY (*with spirit*). You bet we do!

WINTERGREEN (*swinging back onto the men*). There you are! We're not through! We haven't begun to fight! By God, we can tour again if we have to! I can still sing! Once a trouper always a trouper! (*MARY is freshening the lip-stick and powdering the face.*) What do you say, boys? Are you with me?

ALL. Yes!

[WINTERGREEN presses the buzzer.]

FULTON. You got to put it over, Jack!

WINTERGREEN. I'll put it over! I'll give them the best performance since Richard Mansfield! Are you ready, Mary?

MARY (*finishing the make-up job*). Ready!

WINTERGREEN (*as a SECRETARY enters*). Bring in those newspapermen!

[*Music strikes up. Enter the NEWSPAPERMEN.*]

WINTERGREEN. Well, gentlemen, what's on your mind?

REPORTERS (*singing it, of course*).

We don't want to know about the moratorium,
Or how near we are to beer,
Or about the League of Nations,
Or the seventeen vacations
You have had since you've been here.

Here's the one thing that the people of America
Are beside themselves to know:
They would like to know what's doing
On the lady who is suing
You—Diana Devereaux?

Ev'rybody wants to know:
What about Miss Devereaux?
From the highest to the low:
What about Miss Devereaux?

WINTERGREEN. It's a pleasant day—
 That's all I can say!

MARY. Here's the one thing we'll announce:
 Love's the only thing that counts!

REPORTERS. People want to know:
 What of Devereaux?

WINTERGREEN. When the one you love is near
 Nothing else can interfere.

ALL. When the one you love is near
 Nothing else can interfere.

WINTERGREEN. Here's some information
 I will gladly give the nation:
 I am for the true love,
 Here's the only girl I do love.

MARY. I love him and he loves me
 And that's how it will always be,
 So what care we about Miss Devereaux?

 Who cares what the public chatters?
 Love's the only thing that matters.

WINTERGREEN. Who cares
 If the sky cares to fall in the sea?
 Who cares what banks fail in Yonkers,
 Long as you've got a kiss that conquers?
 Why should I sigh?
 Life is one long jubilee,
 So long as I care for you
 And you care for me.

[*This argument being unanswerable, the REPORTERS go, completely convinced. The COMMITTEE, highly pleased, surrounds WINTERGREEN and congratulates him.*]

WINTERGREEN. Nothing at all, boys! I owe it all to the little woman!

MARY. You were grand, John!

FULTON. I never heard you in better voice!

WINTERGREEN. Did you hear that F sharp I gave them?

GILHOOLEY. Great!

WINTERGREEN (*letting his voice loose for a second in a snatch of operatic aria*). Do you know what I'll do? I'll go on the radio every night! Mary and I!

FULTON. National Biscuit Co.! They've been after you!

JONES. National Biscuit! That's a very popular hour in the West!

WINTERGREEN. A new song every night! I'll even get a megaphone!

MARY. And we can make records!

WINTERGREEN (*ever practical*). No, dear. They don't sell any more!

FULTON. Well, every little helps!

MARY. And I can still bake!

WINTERGREEN. What!

MARY. Corn muffins! Corn muffins for the unemployed!

WINTERGREEN. That's my girl. You feed 'em and I'll sing to them! We'll get the country back! Give us a week and they'll forget that Devereaux ever lived! (*A chorus of approval from the COMMITTEE*) And you fellows wanted to quit! Why, we haven't begun to fight! This is a cinch! What would you do if a real fight came along! (*Enter a dozen SECRETARIES*) What's this?

SECRETARIES. The French Ambassador!

WINTERGREEN. I can't see him! (*Enter another dozen SECRETARIES*) And what's this?

SECRETARIES. The French Ambassador!

WINTERGREEN. I can't see him!

[*Enter half a dozen French SOLDIERS, in full uniforms and Oh! what beards. They line up and sing, it being an old rule that French SOLDIERS always sing when they line up.*]

Garçon, s'il vous plait,
Encore Chevrolet Coupé;
Papah, pooh, pooh, pooh!
À vous toot dir vay, à vous?
Garçon, q'est-ce que c'est?
Tra la, Maurice Chevalier!
J'adore crêpes Suzette
Et aussi Lafayette!

And now we give the meaning of our song:

We're six of the fifty million and we can't be wrong!

[*Enter the FRENCH AMBASSADOR. You never saw so many medals.*]

FRENCH SOLDIERS. Ze French Ambassador!

WINTERGREEN. I still can't see him.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR (*sings*). I am the Ambassador of France!

WINTERGREEN. Europe?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR (*recitative*). And I have come here to see a grievous wrong righted. My country is deeply hurt. Not since the days of Louis the Seventh, the Eighth, the Ninth, the Tenth, and possibly the Eleventh have such a thing happen!

WINTERGREEN. What's troubling you?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. You have done a great injustice to a French descendant—a lovely girl whose rights have been trampled in the dust!

ALL. Who is she? What's her name?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Her name is Diana Devereaux.

ALL. Diana Devereaux! Diana Devereaux! Since when is she of French descent?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

I've been looking up her family tree,
And I have found a most important pedigree!

She's the illegitimate daughter
Of an illegitimate son
Of an illegitimate nephew
Of Napoleon!

ALL (*awed*). Napoleon!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

She offers aristocracy
To this bizarre democracy,
Where naught is sacred but the old simoleon!
I must know why
You crucify
My native country
With this effront'ry,
To the illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate son
Of an illegitimate nephew of Napoleon!

ALL. To the illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate son
Of an illegitimate nephew of Napoleon!

COMMITTEE.

You so-and-so!
We didn't know
She had a tie-up
So very high up.

She's the illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate son
Of an illegitimate nephew of Napoleon!

[*The voice of DIANA is heard in the distance. A snatch of aria. She enters, singing.*]

DIANA. I was the most beautiful blossom in all the Southland.

WINTERGREEN AND MARY. We know all that.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. You know all that—but you *don't* know the misery of this poor little girl who has suffered. Because—

COMMITTEE. Because—

WINTERGREEN AND MARY. Because?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Because?

DIANA (*It seems to be a reprise*).

Because, because, because, because—

I won the competition

But I got no recognition

And because he broke my heart!

Because, because, because, because—

The man who ought to love me

Tried to make a monkey of me;

Double-crossing from the start!

I might have been First Lady,
But now my past is shady;
Oh, pity this poor maidie!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

And there's the man who ought to pay!

ALL.

Because, because, because, because—
She won the prize for beauty
And he didn't do his duty,
He has broken her poor heart!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. You see how this poor child has suffered. And so, on behalf of France, I demand that your marriage be annulled and that you marry Diana!

WINTERGREEN. Never! Never!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Then you will arouse the anger of France and you must be prepared to face the consequences!

[*The French contingent, with DIANA, marches off, singing "Garçon, S'il Vous Plait."* There is a momentous pause.]

FULTON. Jack, you've got to do something about this!

WINTERGREEN. Leave my Mary? Never!

FULTON. We are all in this together;
We are birdies of a feather;
And if you don't change your thesis,
Then our party goes to pieces!

LYONS. All our jobs you'll be destroying
With your attitude annoying.

GILHOOLEY. You will get us all in trouble!
And in spades, sir, which is double!

WINTERGREEN. I will never leave my Mary!

LYONS. Since he's acting so contrary,
Send him off on a vacation!

GILHOOLEY. I suggest his resignation!

WINTERGREEN. Resignation?

ALL. Resignation!

FULTON. You've got to face it—this is a crisis!
To leave your Mary, you may decline,
But to save us, my good advice is—
You resign!

ALL. Yes, resign!

WINTERGREEN. I assure you, though it's a crisis,
To leave my Mary I must decline
And I don't care what your advice is,
I decline to resign!

MARY. We decline to resign!

ALL. He is stubborn—we must teach him;
I'm afraid we must impeach him!

He is stubborn—we must teach him;
 He has forced us to impeach him!
 You decline to resign,
 So we'll teach you!
 We'll impeach you!
 You decline to resign—
 We don't envy you at all!
 You decline to resign,
 So we'll teach you,
 We'll impeach you!
 You decline to resign—
 Humpty Dumpty has to fall!

[*They go—leaving WINTERGREEN and MARY alone. In the circumstances there is only one thing to do—and they do it. They sing a reprise.*]

Who cares
 If the sky cares to fall in the sea?
 We two together can win out;
 Just remember to stick your chin out.
 Why should we sigh?
 Life is one long jubilee—
 So long as I care for you.
 And you care for me.

[*The lights dim; the curtains come together.*]

ACT TWO—SCENE TWO

A Capitol corridor, just outside the United States Senate. A smartly dressed page comes out of the Senate door; another goes in.

Enter, then, the COMMITTEE—those same five boys. As they come in FULTON is doing the talking.

FULTON. Say, I'm just as sorry as anybody. I like Jack as much as you do, and I'd give my shirt not to have to do this.

JONES. We can't be sentimental at a time like this.

GILHOOLEY. Say! Wait a minute! If he's put out of office who becomes the President?

JONES. Why, the vice-president, of course.

LIPPMAN. Who's that?

FULTON (*as it dawns on him*). We haven't got a vice-president.

GILHOOLEY. Sure we have! He came up to the room!

[*Enter ALEXANDER THROTTLEBOTTOM. He is panting, having run all the way from the White House. The COMMITTEE continues its argument.*]

FULTON (*suddenly remembering*). Pitts! I nominated him!

[*A chorus of dissent. LIPPMAN: "No, that wasn't his name!" JONES: "It was Schaeffer!" LYONS: "No, Pitts!" GILHOOLEY: "No, it was a longer name. Barbinelli!"*]

[THROTTLEBOTTOM, *who has been listening to all this in full expectation of imminent discovery, now comes over to them.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Hello, gentlemen!

FULTON. It was Alexander Something.

GILHOOLEY. Yah, that's it!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Throttlebottom.

GILHOOLEY. That's right!

[*A chorus from the others. "Yes, that's right!"*]

FULTON (*realizing that it is a stranger who has spoken*). Oh! Thank you. (*Hands him a cigar.*)

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Oh, thank you, Mr. Fulton.

FULTON (*looking at him*). Haven't I seen you before some place?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I'm Throttlebottom.

FULTON. Huh?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Throttlebottom. The vice-president. That's how I knew the name.

[*A chorus of greetings. "Well, hello!" "Where have you been?" "Well, for God's sake!" "Here! Have a light!"*]

FULTON. Well, for heaven's sake! Just the fellow we were looking for!

GILHOOLEY. Yes, *sir*!

FULTON. We want to talk to you!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Me?

LYONS. That's what!

FULTON. We've got a surprise for you!

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*covering his eyes*). A surprise?

LIPPMAN. Sure! Remember I told you you had a chance to be President?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Yeah!

FULTON. Well, we've been thinking it over and we're going to make you President!

GILHOOLEY. That's what we are!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. President! Say! You mean of the United States?

JONES. That's what we do!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But what was the matter with the other fellow?

FULTON. We're going to impeach him!

GILHOOLEY. He wouldn't play ball with us!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, I don't play very well—you see this finger—

FULTON. Come on! Let's get started!

GILHOOLEY. Yeah, we've got work to do!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. You really mean it? I'm not vice-president any more?

JONES. Not if we impeach the President!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, when do we do that?

JONES. Right now! Come on!

FULTON. You've got to preside over the Senate!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. And after that I'll be President?

LYONS. That's what you will!

[*The COMMITTEE enters the Senate. THROTTLEBOTTOM is about to follow when a SCRUBWOMAN comes along the corridor.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. President! Say! (*To the SCRUBWOMAN*) How will that sound? President Alexander Bottlethrottum. (*Corrects himself*) Throttlebottom.

SCRUBWOMAN. Huh?

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*he has to tell someone*). I'm going to be President!

SCRUBWOMAN. I'd rather have this job. It's steady.

[*She goes, just as WINTERGREEN and JENKINS arrive from the other side.*]

JENKINS. Well, it's a dirty trick, Chief. That's all I've got to say.

WINTERGREEN. It's politics. They've got to eat, too.

JENKINS. Want me to go in with you?

WINTERGREEN. No. I want to handle this alone.

JENKINS. More power to you, Chief. (*Takes his hand; holds it during the following speech*) And I want you to know that if the worst comes to the worst, and they fire you out—

WINTERGREEN. I know—if they fire me out you want a job with the next President.

JENKINS. Right! (*He goes.*)

[*WINTERGREEN starts for the door into the Senate.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Hello, Mr. President. Hey!

WINTERGREEN. Hey?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I'll bet you don't remember me, do you?

WINTERGREEN (*after a searching gaze*). You're the fellow that gave me that dill pickle.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. That's right.

WINTERGREEN. What are you doing now?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I'm vice-president.

WINTERGREEN. You don't say? Lost your other job, huh?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, I'm going to have a good job now, because I'm going to be President.

WINTERGREEN (*realizing it*). Say, that's right! If they kick me out that makes you President.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Say, I wonder if you'd mind doing me a favor?

WINTERGREEN. Sure!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. You see, I don't know anything about being President. I just found out today how to be vice-president.

WINTERGREEN. Well, that's something.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Isn't there some book I could read?

WINTERGREEN. Yes. I'm writing one. "What Every Young President Ought to Know."

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Has it got pictures?

WINTERGREEN. It's got everything! Tells you just what to do! Of course the first four years are easy. You don't do anything except try to get re-elected.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. That's pretty hard these days.

WINTERGREEN. It looks that way. The next four years you wonder why the hell you wanted to be re-elected. And after that you go into the insurance business and you're all set.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, couldn't I save a lot of time and go right into the insurance business?

WINTERGREEN. No, you've got to work yourself up.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Yeah, but it's a pretty hard job, being President. You've got to keep on writing those Thanksgiving proclamations, no matter what—and then there's that other bunch, Congress. I guess there isn't anything you can really do about Congress, is there?

WINTERGREEN. Take my advice and keep them out of Washington.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Can you do that?

WINTERGREEN. St. Patrick did it. Keep them out if you have to quarantine the place. Get the measles.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I had measles once.

WINTERGREEN. Yeah, but you never had Congress. That's worse.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Oh! What about those messages that the President is always sending to Congress—who reads those, anyway?

WINTERGREEN. The fellow who prints 'em.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, wouldn't everybody read them if you made 'em funnier?

WINTERGREEN. No, we've had some pretty funny ones.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Couldn't you make a speech instead? Then they'd *have* to listen.

WINTERGREEN. No, no! You've got to be careful about speeches. You only make a speech when you want the stock market to go down.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. What do you do when you want the stock market to go up?

WINTERGREEN (*fairly falling on his neck*). Oh! wouldn't I like to know!

CURTAIN

ACT TWO—SCENE THREE

Inside the Senate Chamber. The great desk of the presiding officer, mounted on a dais; in circles around him the desks of the SENATORS. SENATORS with Dunderaries, SENATORS with long white beards, SENATORS of all kinds and descriptions.

When the curtain rises they are all in their places, and THROTTLEBOTTOM is on high. The roll is being called, to music, of course, and the SENATORS sway rhythmically back and forth in time to the music, humming as they do so.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. The Senator from North Dakota!

SENATOR. Present!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator from Minnesota!

SENATOR. Present!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator from Lou'siana!

SENATOR. Present!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator who's from Montana!
SENATOR. Present!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator who's from Alaska!
[*A new State, by the way.*]

SENATOR. Present!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator who's from Nebraska!

SENATOR. Present!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . .

The Senators from other States
Will have to bide their time,
For I simply can't be bothered
When the names don't rhyme!

[*The SENATORS continue to hum and to sway; led by THROTTLEBOTTOM, they now go into song.*]

The country thinks it's got depression;
Ha! Ha! Ha!
Just wait until we get in session!
Ha! Ha! Ha!
The people want a lot of action;
Ho! Ho! Ho!
We're here to give them satisfaction!
Ho! Ho! Ho!
Today is really full of laughter,
Ha! Ha! Ha!
Compared to what will follow after!
Ha! Ha! Ha!

There's action ev'ry minute when this happy group convenes:
To get business into tangles
We can guarantee more angles
Than the town of Boston guarantees in beans!
If you think you've got depression
Wait until we get in session
And you'll find out what depression really means!

CLERK. It is now twelve o'clock noon and the Senate of the United States is hereby declared in session.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Thanks. Gentlemen, when you hear the musical note it will be exactly twelve o'clock noon. (*And he brings the gavel down—right on his watch*) Well, gentlemen, I'm glad to meet you all. You'll have to excuse me for not knowing much about this job. I see I made one mistake already—I went and got shaved. Now let's get at things—I'm only going to be with you one day, so let's make it a pip.

CLERK. The first thing before the Senate is unfinished business!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. But aren't we going to impeach the President?

CLERK. Unfinished business!

SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS. Mr. Chairman! Mr. Chairman!

CLERK (*to THROTTLEBOTTOM*). That's you.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Oh, I thought I was just vice-president.

CLERK. You must recognize the Senator from Massachusetts.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Oh, hello! How's everything in Massachusetts?

SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS. Mr. Chairman! I rise to protest against a great injustice! In seventeen hundred and seventy-five Paul Revere made the famous ride that saved his country from the greedy clutch of England.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. That's right—I read about that. (*Informally, to the CLERK*) He went from one house to another, and he knocked on the door, and by the time they came out he was at the next house.

SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS. Paul Revere's name has been given the affectionate tribute of a grateful people. But what of that gallant figure who is even more responsible? Gentlemen: what about Jenny, Paul Revere's horse? (*Applause*) Surely, gentlemen, Jenny is entitled to the protection of a governmental pension. A bill providing such a pension was introduced into this body in the year 1804, and came up for its first reading in 1852.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. I wasn't here then.

SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS. Gentlemen, in these hundred and fifty-five years Jenny has not been getting any younger. I ask you, gentlemen, what are we going to do about Jenny?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Well, that's unfinished business if I ever heard it.

SENATOR JONES. May I point out to the Senator from Massachusetts that Jenny is dead?

THROTTLEBOTTOM. She is? What do you think of that? Good old Jenny! When did she die?

SENATOR JONES. She died in 1805.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. The Senate will rise for one minute in silent tribute to the departed horse from Massachusetts. (*They rise: he bangs the gavel*) Well, that finishes Jenny. Is there any other unfinished business?

SENATOR LYONS. Mr. Chairman! Gentlemen! I crave the indulgence of this august body while I say a few words in honor of my wife's birthday. (*Applause*) And I move you, Mr. Chairman, that the Senate appropriate \$5,000 for flowers to be sent her on this historic occasion.

A SENATOR. Second the motion!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. All in favor say "Aye"! (*A full-throated "Aye" from the assemblage.*) Motion carried! (*To the CLERK*) Put in my card. . . . Now, what comes next? How about impeaching the President?

CLERK (*handing him a sheet of paper*). Mr. Vice-President—

THROTTLEBOTTOM. What's this?

CLERK. The following committees are ready to report.

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*consulting the paper*). Committee on Aviation. . . . Aire-dale. . . . Bloomingdale's. . . . (*Closes his eyes, one finger suspended over the paper*) Eenie, meenie, minie, mo. Catch a committee by the toe. If they holler give 'em dough, eenie, meenie, minie, mo. (*Places his finger on the*

paper, looks to see which committee he has selected) Committee on Unemployment.

SENATOR JONES. The Committee on Unemployment is gratified to report that due to its unremitting efforts there is now more unemployment in the United States than ever before.

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Now we're getting some place! Now let's impeach the President!

SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS. Mr. Chairman! I would like to call the attention of the Senate to a matter that has been puzzling me for some time. It has to do with a very interesting bridge hand, in which the cards were distributed as follows: East held the four aces, West the four kings, North the four queens, and South—ah—nothing of any importance.

LYONS (*rising indignantly*). Mr. Chairman! The South will never be satisfied with a hand like that!

[*A fanfare of trumpets.*]

PAGES (*announcing*). The President of the United States!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Who?

CLERK. The President of the United States!

[*He enters.*]

CLERK. The next business before the Senate is the resolution on the impeachment of the President!

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*to WINTERGREEN*). Won't you sit down while we kick you out?

[*Enter, to music, FULTON and the COMMITTEE.*]

COMMITTEE (*in harmony*). Whereas—

LYONS. At a meeting of the Senate at which a quorum was present a motion was made and it was proposed that—

COMMITTEE. Whereas—

LYONS. John P. Wintergreen had undertaken to marry the winner of a contest held at Atlantic City—

COMMITTEE. Whereas—

LYONS. His subsequent refusal to marry the winner, Miss Diana Devereaux, will lead to dire international complications—

COMMITTEE. Whereas—

LYONS. Now therefore be it resolved that President John Wintergreen be, and he hereby is, impeached from the said office of President of these United States.

JONES. I second the resolution.

FULTON. Our first witness—the French Ambassador.

[*Enter the six French SOLDIERS.*]

SOLDIERS.

Garçon, s'il vous plait,
Encore, Chevrolet Coupé;
Papah, pooh, pooh pooh!
À vous toot dir vay à vous?

SENATORS.

We say how d'you do,
Which means that we welcome you;
We're glad of the chance
To say hello to France.

[*The FRENCH AMBASSADOR enters.*]

FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

You've dealt a lovely maid
A blow that is injurious;
A very dirty trick was played
And France is simply furious!

SENATORS.

He says a lovely maid
Was dealt a blow injurious;
He says a dirty trick was played
And France is simply furious.

FULTON. Ambassador, please explain why France should be concerned about the plaintiff.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. She's the illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate son
Of an illegitimate nephew of Napoleon!

ALL. Napoleon!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. She's contemplating suicide

Because that man he threw aside
A lady with the blue blood of Napoleon.
What sort of man
Is this who can
Insult my country
With this effront'ry.

ALL.

To the illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate son
Of an illegitimate nephew of Napoleon!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. The Atlantic City witnesses! (*Enter the girls in bathing suits*) And Miss Diana Devereaux!

DIANA. I have come all ze way from France to bring ze greetings.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Tell your story, little one. Commencez, s'il vous plait.

DIANA (*sings*).

Jilted, jilted,
I'm a flow'r that's wilted;
Blighted, blighted,
Till the wrong is righted;
Broken, broken,
By a man soft-spoken;
Faded, faded,
Heaven knows why.
When men are deceivers, I'm afraid,
'Tis said to be a trusting maid.
Jilted, jilted, jilted am I,
Oh, what is there left but to die?

ALL. Just as in the Frankie and Johnnie song—

THROTTLEBOTTOM. He done her wrong, he done her wrong—

ALL. Jilted, jilted, jilted is she!

Oh, what is there left but—to dee?

[*The SENATE is visibly affected.*]

THROTTLEBOTTOM. And now, Mr. President, what have you to say for yourself?

WINTERGREEN. Impeach me! Fine me! Jail me! Sue me!

My Mary's love means much more to me!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Enough, enough! We want no preachment!

It's time to vote on his impeachment!

ALL. It's time to vote on his impeachment!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. The Senator from Minnesota?

SENATOR. Guilty!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator from North Dakota?

SENATOR. Guilty!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator from Lou'siana?

SENATOR. Guilty!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Check! . . . The Senator who's from Montana?

[*And at this dramatic moment, in breaks MARY TURNER WINTERGREEN.*]

MARY. Stop! stop! stop!

WINTERGREEN. Mary!

MARY (*to music*).

Before you go any further, with your permission,

I must tell you of my husband's delicate condition.

ALL. Delicate condition! What do you mean?

MARY (*such a gay song*).

I'm about to be a mother;

He's about to be a father;

We're about to have a baby:

I must tell it,

These doings compel it!

Oh, I'm about to be a mother;

He's about to be a father;

We're about to have a baby—

ALL.

A baby!

MARY.

A baby to love and adore—

Who could ask for anything more?

ALL. (*dancing happily*).

She's about to be a mother;

He's about to be a father;

They're about to have a baby:

We can't bother

A budding young father!

WINTERGREEN. Mary, is it true? Am I to have a baby?

MARY. It's true, John, it's true!

WINTERGREEN. It's wonderful, it's wonderful—water! Water! (*He faints.*)

DIANA. It eez a fine countree—I am compromised and she has ze babee!

THROTTLEBOTTOM. Gentlemen, gentlemen—this country has never yet impeached an expectant father. What do you say?

SENATORS. Not guilty!

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*to the CLERK*). Check that!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

Sacré! I go to the telegraph office to cable my report:

This is American trickery of the most reprehensible sort!

DIANA. I was the most beautiful blossom—(*The AMBASSADOR takes her by the hand; leads her away*)—in all the Southland.

SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS. Great work, Jack! You'll be reinstated in the hearts of the American people.

SENATOR JONES. You're doing your duty by posterity.

WINTERGREEN. Posterity? Why, posterity is just around the corner.

ALL. Posterity is just around the corner!
 Posterity is just around the corner!
 It really doesn't pay to be a mourner.
 Posterity is just around the corner!
 Posterity is here—I don't mean maybe!
 There's nothing guarantees it like a baby!
 Posterity is here and will continue!
 We really didn't know you had it in you!
 Posterity
 Is in its infancy!

WINTERGREEN. I sing to ev'ry citizen and for'gner:
 Posterity is just around the corner!

[THROTTLEBOTTOM, *with a base drum, is leading a march around the room.*]
 Posterity is just around the—

ALL. Oomposterity, oomp-osterity, oompah, oompah, oomp-posterity.
 Oomp-posterity, oomp-posterity, oompah, oompah, oom-
 Posterity is just around the corner!
 Around the corner!

CURTAIN

ACT TWO—SCENE FOUR

A corridor in the White House. Enter JENKINS and MISS BENSON.

JENKINS. It'll certainly be great to have a baby in the White House. I wonder when it'll be born.

MISS BENSON. Let's see—they were married March 4, weren't they?

JENKINS. That's right.

MISS BENSON (*counting on her fingers*). April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, DECEMBER! It'll be born in December.

JENKINS. How do you know?

MISS BENSON. Well, it won't be born *before* December.

JENKINS. How do you know?

MISS BENSON. Oh, the President wouldn't do a thing like that. He'd never be re-elected.

JENKINS. You can't tell. Might be the very thing that would re-elect him.

MISS BENSON. It's certainly wonderful the way this has lined people up behind the President.

JENKINS. Yeah, but we don't know what France is going to do. She's still liable to make trouble.

MISS BENSON. My, you'd think a woman could have a baby without France butting in.

JENKINS. Well, fifty million Frenchmen—they've got to do something.

MISS BENSON. Let 'em do it in Paris. Why should they come over here and—

WINTERGREEN (*singing as he enters*). "Somebody's coming to our house; somebody's coming to stay—" Oh, hello.

JENKINS. Hi, Chief!

MISS BENSON. Good morning, Mr. President. And how is Mrs. Wintergreen this morning?

WINTERGREEN (*vaguely*). Who? Mrs. Wintergreen? (*Realizes that there is such a person*) Oh, she's fine! Fine! Yes, sir! (*Tapping his own chest*) Should have seen the breakfast I ate!

MISS BENSON. Tell me, Mr. President. Ah—(*hesitantly*)—when is the baby expected?

WINTERGREEN. Well, of course you can't tell about such things, but we think sometime in Novem—December. (*Another quick correction*) December.

MISS BENSON (*with a look at JENKINS*). Oh, December.

WINTERGREEN. Yes, we sort of thought December would be a nice month. End the old year right and all that sort of thing. Have a cigar? Oh, pardon me, the baby isn't born yet.

[*Enter FULTON.*]

FULTON. Hello, Jack!

WINTERGREEN. Hello, there! Should have seen the breakfast I ate. (*To the SECRETARIES*) See you later.

MISS BENSON (*to JENKINS*). I told you December.

JENKINS. Well, I'd still like to make a bet on it.

[*The SECRETARIES go.*]

FULTON. Well, Jack, how are you? And how's the wife?

WINTERGREEN. Fine, fine! Never felt better.

FULTON. Mighty smart girl, Mary. She certainly saved the day for us.

WINTERGREEN. *She* saved the day? I suppose I was just an innocent bystander?

FULTON. I don't mean that, but I thought it sort of came as a surprise to you.

WINTERGREEN. Surprise? Why, I planned the whole thing. I foresaw the situation months ago.

FULTON. Anyway, it settled France. They're still yelling, but there's nothing they can do about it. The American people are behind you to a man. How'd you ever get the idea, Jack?

WINTERGREEN. Why, it wasn't anything. Nothing at all. Anybody in my place would have done the same.

FULTON. Yes, sir, it'll be a wonderful thing to have a baby in the White House.

WINTERGREEN. You mean instead of a President?

FULTON. No, no, Jack—I mean it. I tell you, there's something about the patter of baby feet, trickling down the stairs. . . .

[*Enter the FRENCH AMBASSADOR.*]

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Gentlemen!

FULTON (*with a bow*). Monsieur!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR (*with an elaborate bow*). Monsieur President.

WINTERGREEN. You all alone?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. But yes.

WINTERGREEN. Where are those six guys who used to march in ahead of you—(*His gesture carries out the idea of crossed bayonets, and even goes a bit further by bringing thumb and nose into close juxtaposition*)—you know.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. They could not come today. They have dancing lesson.

WINTERGREEN. You look kind of naked without them.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR (*acknowledges this with a bow*). You will pardon this intrusion, Monsieur, but I have received another note from my country.

WINTERGREEN. That's all right. We've got a lot of notes from your country, and some of them were due ten years ago.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. But this is not a promise to pay—this is serious.

WINTERGREEN. Shoot!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR (*bows*). Monsieur, I have good news for you. France consents to your having the child.

FULTON. Ah!

WINTERGREEN. France consents?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Freely.

WINTERGREEN. Why, that's wonderful of her. Good old France! Do you mind if I tell my wife, so she can go ahead? (*AMBASSADOR bows*) You've no idea how this will please her. Won't take me a minute—I'll be right back.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. But one moment, Monsieur. (*WINTERGREEN pauses*) France consents, but on one condition.

WINTERGREEN. Yeah?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. France must have the baby!

FULTON. } WHAT?

WINTERGREEN. }

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Do not be hasty, Monsieur. You must understand the desperate situation of my country. For fifty years the birth rate of France has been declining, declining, declining.

WINTERGREEN. What's that got to do with me?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. You must see, Monsieur. If you had married Mlle. Devereaux, as you have promise, the baby she is French. But now you have taken away from France one baby, and she demand replacement.

WINTERGREEN. Never!

FULTON. I should say not!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. It is the old law, Monsieur; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a baby for a baby.

WINTERGREEN. You'll get no tooth from my baby!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. The tooth, the whole tooth, and nothing but the tooth!

WINTERGREEN. Not one tooth!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. That is your final word?

WINTERGREEN. It is! Good day, Monsieur!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Good day! (*Clicks his heels; salutes; turns and starts out*) Lafayette, we are coming! (*Goes.*)

FULTON. What do you think France'll do?

WINTERGREEN. What's the worst she can do? Sue us for what she owes us?

FULTON. But that other thing! France is awful touchy about her birth rate!

WINTERGREEN. What are you worrying about? I fixed *this* up, didn't I?

FULTON. What?

WINTERGREEN. Well, Mary's going to have a baby, isn't she?

FULTON. Yes!

WINTERGREEN. Well! Next year I make a tour of France! Lafayette! (*He salutes.*)

CURTAIN

ACT TWO—SCENE FIVE

The Yellow Room of the White House. And is it yellow? But it is also very beautiful—and endless. It extends as far as the eye can reach—a vista of hallway, and polished floor, and chandeliers, and ladies in evening clothes, and men in magnificent uniforms. White-wigged flunkies move in and out of the assemblage.

At the rise of the curtain an endless line of diplomats is presenting the WINTERGREENS with an endless line of baby carriages. The flunkies bellow the names as they accept the carriages—"Compliments of Ecuador," "Compliments of Bolivia," "Compliments of Spain," "Compliments of Lithuania." And then, for finale, an exceedingly small baby carriage. You've guessed it—"Compliments of Scotland."

[There is a burst of music.]

ALL. Oh, trumpeter, trumpeter, blow your golden horn!
Oh, trumpeter, trumpeter, blow your golden horn!
A White House baby will very soon be born,
A White House baby will very soon be born!
Blow your horn!

With a hey, nonny nonny, and a ha cha cha!
 With a hey, nonny nonny, and a ha cha cha!

There's something glorious happening today
 For all the citizens of the U. S. A.

A White House baby will very soon be born,
 Oh, trumpeter, blow your horn,
 Oh, trumpeter, blow your horn,
 Oh, trumpeter, blow your horn,
 Your golden horn, your golden horn!

[*The DOCTOR enters.*]

Oh, doctor, doctor, what's the news, we pray?
 We've waited for your bulletin all day.

DOCTOR. The baby of the President and frau
 Will be here almost any minute now.

ALL. With a hey, nonny nonny, and a ha cha cha!
 With a hey, nonny nonny, and a ha cha cha!

Oh, doctor, here is the one thing we must know,
 We're all of us anxious and we've got to know:
 The baby, is it to be a girl or boy?

A baby girl or boy?

A nation's pride and joy!

We must know whether it's a girl or boy—
 A girl or boy?

DOCTOR. On that matter no one budes,
 For all cases of the sort
 Are decided by the judges
 Of the *Supreme Court*.

FLUNKIES. The *Supreme Court*!

[*Enter the SUPREME COURT.*]

JUDGES. We're the one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine
Supreme Court Judges.

ALL. With a hey, nonny nonny, and a ha cha cha!
 With a hey, nonny nonny, and a ha cha cha!

About the baby—will it be
 A boy or girl—a he or she?

JUDGES. On that matter no one budes
 For all cases of the sort
 Are decided by the judges
 Of the *Supreme Court*.

FLUNKIES. The Secretary of Agriculture!

[Enter LIPPMAN.]

LIPPMAN. The farmers in the dell,
The farmers in the dell,
They all keep a-asking me:
A boy or a gel?

FLUNKIES. The Secretary of the Navy!

[Enter GILHOOLEY.]

GILHOOLEY. All the sailors in the Navy
Of these great United States,
Do not eat their bowls of gravy,
Nor the captains nor the mates.
They refuse to jib an anchor,
Strike a boom or heave a sail,
Till you've satisfied their hanker:
Is it female or a male?

FLUNKIES. Senator Carver Jones!

[Enter JONES.]

JONES. Out on the prairie,
The cowboys all keep asking of me:
He or a she—
She or a he?
Out on the prairie,
For baby boy or girl they are keen,
But they want nothing in between.

FLUNKIES. Senator Robert E. Lyons!

[Enter LYONS.]

LYONS. Way down upon the Swanee River
Folks are filled with joy,
But they want to know what will the stork deliver?
Will it be a girl or boy?

ALL. There's something glorious happening today;
A baby will be born,
A baby will be born.
Oh, trumpeter, trumpeter, blow your golden horn!

[Enter WINTERBOTTOM, followed by FULTON and JENKINS.]

FULTON. Take it easy, Jack! Nothing can happen to her.

WINTERGREEN. I know, but at a time like this—Mary in there alone—
(A chorus of greeting from all) Oh! Hello! God, I'm nervous! Anybody got a
drink? (Every man brings out a flask) Thanks. When I think of Mary in
there alone—(Takes a drink) Well, I guess it's not going to be so hard for her.

GILHOOLEY. How is Mary?

WINTERGREEN. Finest little woman in the world! When I think of what she's

got to—anybody got a drink? (*The flasks come out again. He takes GIL-HOOLEY's, although he still has FULTON's in his hand*) Well, I guess I'd better not mix them.

MISS BENSON. Oh, Mr. Wintergreen!

WINTERGREEN (*wheeling*). Any news?

MISS BENSON. The baby will be here at any moment.

[*An excited buzz from the crowd.*]

WINTERGREEN. Tell 'em I'm ready. (MISS BENSON goes) My God! You hear that? What do I do now? Anybody got a drink?

CHIEF JUSTICE. Gentlemen, duty calls. The baby is now being born. We must decide the sex.

WINTERGREEN. *You* decide?

CHIEF JUSTICE. We do, sir.

JUDGES. On that matter no one budes,
 For all cases of the sort
 Are decided by the judges
 Of the Supreme Court!

[*They retire.*]

WINTERGREEN. I shouldn't be drinking at a time like this. (*To JENKINS and the COMMITTEE*) Here! Take it away! (*JENKINS reaches for the flask. WINTERGREEN pulls away*) Oh, no, you don't. My wife's the finest little woman in the world! And I can lick anybody that says she ain't!

FLUNKIES (*announcing*). The French Ambassador!

WINTERGREEN. Bring him in!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Your Excellency! I have another message from France!

WINTERGREEN. Not a nickel!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Will you surrender the baby?

WINTERGREEN. Never! Give my baby to France and have it eat snails and get ptomaine poisoning! Never!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Then, sir, I am instructed to say that with the birth of the child France severs diplomatic relations!

WINTERGREEN. Hurray!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. And that is not all, sir. I wish furthermore to report—
[*Two FLUNKIES enter and blow a fanfare on their trumpets. The SUPREME COURT re-enters.*]

JUDGES. Whereas—

CHIEF JUSTICE. A child has been born to the President of the United States and his consort—

JUDGES. Whereas—

CHIEF JUSTICE. The Supreme Court of the United States has been called upon to determine the sex of the aforesaid infant—

JUDGES. Whereas—

CHIEF JUSTICE. By a strict party vote it has been decided that—

JUDGES. It's a boy!

[*The committee and guests press around WINTERGREEN to congratulate him.*]

WINTERGREEN. A boy! That makes me a father! Thank you! Thank you very much! I certainly am a lucky man! Boy, the cigars! Smoke up, everybody! Here you are, ladies and gentlemen! Have a cigar, Frenchy!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. My thanks, Monsieur. On behalf of France permit me to offer my felicitations.

WINTERGREEN. Attaboy! Let bygones be bygones! Have another cigar!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. And permit me also to inform you that France hereby severs diplomatic relations! (*He reaches for the cigar.*)

WINTERGREEN (*closes the humidor with a bang*). Then the hell with you!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. You understand what this means, Monsieur?

WINTERGREEN. I do! (*Takes back the first cigar*) It means no smoke!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Precisely. And where there is no smoke there is fire. I am instructed to say, Monsieur, that this means that the French government will—

[*The FLUNKIES re-enter. Another fanfare. The JUSTICES re-enter.*]

JUDGES. Whereas—

CHIEF JUSTICE. A child has been born to the President of the United States and his consort—

WINTERGREEN. Hey! We had that.

CHIEF JUSTICE. But you are having it again, sir. This one is a girl!

[*All crowd around WINTERGREEN to congratulate him again.*]

WINTERGREEN. A girl! That makes me a father *and* a mother. Twins! That's a little more than I counted on!

JENKINS. Cigars, sir?

WINTERGREEN. No. Cigarettes this time! A boy *and* a girl! Well!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR (*sings*).

Oh, I can stand no more,
My temper's getting gingery;
This certainly will lead to war!
This insult added to injury!

You realize what you have done, sir? You have taken away from France not one baby, but two!

WINTERGREEN. That's it! Blame me for everything!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. What you have done to Mlle. Devereaux! That poor little girl! Where is she? What is she doing?

[*In the distance DIANA is heard singing "I was the most beautiful blossom."*]

WINTERGREEN. She's still singing. (*DIANA enters*) You like that song, don't you?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. My poor motherless one! My sweet blossom of the Southland!

FLUNKIES (*announcing*). The Vice-President of the United States!

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*knitting a baby's sweater*). Is the baby born yet? I just got this finished!

WINTERGREEN. Only one? Where's the other one?

THROTTLEBOTTOM (*pulls out second sweater*). I thought something like that might happen!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Once and for all, Monsieur, what are you going to do? What are you going to do about Mlle. Devereaux and her babies?

WINTERGREEN. Well, she can have her own babies.

DIANA. But I am not married, Monsieur.

WINTERGREEN. What's that got to do with it?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Everything. The family has been illegitimate long enough.

WINTERGREEN. Then let her get married!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Exactly! But it was agreed, Monsieur, that she was to marry the President of the United States.

WINTERGREEN. But she can't have me! I'm married!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Then it is war, sir! When the President of the United States fails to fulfil his duty—

WINTERGREEN. That's it! I've got it!

ALL. Got what?

WINTERGREEN. It's in the Constitution! When the President of the United States is unable to fulfil his duties, his obligations are assumed by—

THROTTLEBOTTOM. The vice-president! I get her!

CHIEF JUSTICE. Article Twelve!

FRENCH AMBASSADOR. Monsieur, you are a genius!

THROTTLEBOTTOM (to WINTERGREEN). I could throw my arms right around your neck!

WINTERGREEN. Oh, no, you don't! Hers!

[*The TRUMPETERS re-enter. Another fanfare.*]

WINTERGREEN. Oh, my God!

CHIEF JUSTICE. It's all right. The boys are merely practicing.

[*There is a great burst of music, and from the more intimate quarters of the White House there comes into the room a great canopied bed, hung with gold, and silver, and bald-headed eagles. In it is MARY TURNER WINTERGREEN, a twin on each arm. WINTERGREEN advances to greet her; the crowd bursts into song. And of all the songs in the world, you'd never guess what they pick out. It's "Of Thee I Sing, Baby."*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ROBERT E. SHERWOOD *In the nineteen-twenties Robert E. Sherwood (b. 1896) wrote plays like The Road to Rome and The Queen's Husband for carefree audiences. In The Petrified Forest (1935) he successfully combined melodramatic action with a social theme, and has since grown considerably in stature as a serious dramatist. He has twice been awarded the Pulitzer Prize, for Idiot's Delight (1936) and Abe Lincoln in Illinois, probably the best modern American historical play. The reader will wish to keep Carl Sandburg's "The Youth of Abraham Lincoln" (p. 446) in mind as he reads this play. And after reading the play, he should reread the reviews on pp. 113 and 115.*

ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

CHARACTERS

MENTOR GRAHAM	MARY TODD
ABE LINCOLN	THE EDWARDS' MAID
ANN RUTLEDGE	JIMMY GALE
BEN MATTLING	AGGIE GALE
JUDGE BOWLING GREEN	GOBEY
NINIAN EDWARDS	STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS
JOSHUA SPEED	WILLIE LINCOLN
TRUM COGDAL	TAD LINCOLN
JACK ARMSTRONG	ROBERT LINCOLN
BAB	THE LINCOLNS' MAID
FEARGUS	CRIMMIN
JASP	BARRICK
SETH GALE	STURVESON
NANCY GREEN	JED
WILLIAM HERNDON	KAVANAGH
ELIZABETH EDWARDS	MAJOR

Soldiers, Railroad Men, Townspeople

SCENES

ACT ONE: In and about New Salem, Illinois, in the 1830's.

SCENE I: Mentor Graham's cabin near New Salem, Illinois.

SCENE II: The Rutledge Tavern, New Salem.

SCENE III: Bowling Green's house near New Salem.

ACT TWO: In and about Springfield, Illinois, in the 1840's.

SCENE IV: Law office of Stuart and Lincoln on the second floor of the Court House in Springfield, Illinois.

SCENE V: Parlor of the Edwards house in Springfield.

SCENE VI: Again the law office.

SCENE VII: On the prairie, near New Salem.

SCENE VIII: Again the parlor of the Edwards house.

ACT THREE: In Springfield, 1858-61.

SCENE IX: A speakers' platform in an Illinois town.

SCENE X: Parlor of the Lincoln's home.

SCENE XI: Lincoln campaign headquarters in the Illinois State House.

SCENE XII: The yards of the railroad station at Springfield.

"Abe Lincoln in Illinois." Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

ACT ONE—SCENE I

MENTOR GRAHAM's cabin near New Salem, Illinois. Late at night.

There is one rude table, piled with books and papers. Over it hangs an oil lamp, the only source of light.

At one side of the table sits MENTOR GRAHAM, a sharp but patient school-teacher.

Across from him is ABE LINCOLN—young, gaunt, tired but intent, dressed in the ragged clothes of a backwoodsman. He speaks with the drawl of southern Indiana—an accent which is more Kentuckian than middle-western.

MENTOR is leaning on the table. ABE's chair is tilted back, so that his face is out of the light. MENTOR turns a page in a grammar book.

MENTOR. The Moods. (MENTOR closes the book and looks at ABE.) Every one of us has many moods. You yourself have more than your share of them, Abe. They express the various aspects of your character. So it is with the English language—and you must try to consider this language as if it were a living person, who may be awkward and stumbling, or pompous and pretentious, or simple and direct. Name me the five moods.

ABE. The Indicative, Imperative, Potential, Subjunctive and Infinitive.

MENTOR. And what do they signify?

ABE. The Indicative Mood is the easy one. It just indicates a thing—like “He loves,” “He is loved”—or, when you put it in the form of a question, “Does he love?” or “Is he loved?” The Imperative Mood is used for commanding, like “Get out and be damned to you.”

MENTOR (*smiling*). Is that the best example you can think of?

ABE. Well—you can put it in the Bible way—“Go thou in peace.” But it's still imperative.

MENTOR. The mood derives its name from the implication of command. But you can use it in a very different sense—in the form of the humblest supplication.

ABE. Like “Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses.”

MENTOR (*reaching for a newspaper in the mess on the table*). I want you to read this—it's a speech delivered by Mr. Webster before the United States Senate. A fine document, and a perfect usage of the Imperative Mood in its hortatory sense. Here it is. Read this—down here. (*He leans back to listen.*)

ABE (*takes paper, leans forward into the light and reads*). “Sir,” the Senator continued, in the rich deep tones of the historic church bells of his native Boston, “Sir—I have not allowed myself to look beyond the Union, to see what might be hidden in the dark recess behind. While the Union lasts . . .” (*ABE has been reading in a monotone, without inflection.*)

MENTOR (*testily*). Don't read it off as if it were an inventory of Denton Offut's groceries. Imagine that *you're* making the speech before the Senate, with the fate of your country at stake. Put your own life into it!

ABE. I couldn't use words as long as Dan'l Webster.

MENTOR. That's what you're here for—to learn! Go ahead.

ABE (*reading slowly, gravely*). "While the Union lasts, we have high prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that, I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that in my day, at least, the curtain may not rise."

MENTOR. Notice the use of verbs from here on.

ABE (*reads*). "When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble glance rather behold the glorious ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, not a single star of it obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory . . ." (*He stumbles over the pronunciation.*)

MENTOR. Interrogatory.

ABE (*continuing*). ". . . interrogatory as 'What is all this worth?' Nor, those other words of delusion and folly, 'Liberty first and Union afterwards'; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—Liberty and Union . . ."

MENTOR. Emphasize the "*and*."

ABE. "Liberty *and* Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!" (*He puts the paper back on the table.*) He must have had 'em up on their feet cheering with *that*, all right.

MENTOR. Some cheered, and some spat, depending on which section they came from.

ABE. What was he talking about?

MENTOR. It was in the debate over the right of any state to secede from the Union. Hayne had pleaded South Carolina's cause—pleaded it ably. He said that just as we have liberty as individuals—so have we liberty as states—to go as we please. Which means, if we don't like the Union, as expressed by the will of its majority, then we can leave it, and set up a new nation, or many nations—so that this continent might be as divided as Europe. But Webster answered him, all right. He proved that without Union, we'd have precious little liberty left. Now—go on with the Potential Mood.

ABE. That signifies possibility—usually of an unpleasant nature. Like, "If I ever get out of debt, I will probably get right back in again."

MENTOR (*smiles*). Why did you select that example, Abe?

ABE. Well—it just happens to be the thought that's always heaviest on my mind.

MENTOR. Is the store in trouble again?

ABE (*calmly*). Yes. Berry's drunk all the whiskey we ought to have sold, and we're going to have to shut up any day now. I guess I'm my father's own son. Give me a steady job, and I'll fail at it.

MENTOR. You haven't been a failure here, Abe. There isn't a manjack in this community that isn't fond of you and anxious to help you get ahead.

ABE (*with some bitterness*). I know—just like you, Mentor, sitting up late nights, to give me learning, out of the goodness of your heart. And now, Josh Speed and Judge Green and some of the others I owe money to want to get me the job of post-master, thinking that maybe I can handle *that*, since there's only one mail comes in a week. I've got friends, all right—the best friends. But they can't change my luck, or maybe it's just my nature.

MENTOR. What you want to do is get out of New Salem. This poor little forgotten town will never give anyone any opportunity.

ABE. Yes—I've thought about moving, think about it all the time. My family have always been movers, shifting about, never knowing what they were looking for, and whatever it was, never finding it. My old father ambled from Virginia, to one place after another in Kentucky, where I was born, and then into Indiana, and then here in Illinois. About all I can remember of when I was a boy was hitching up, and then unhitching, and then hitching up again.

MENTOR. Then get up and go, Abe. Make a new place for yourself in a new world.

ABE. As a matter of fact, Seth Gale and me have been talking a lot about moving—out to Kansas or Nebraska territory. But—wherever I go—it'll be the same story—more friends, more debts.

MENTOR. Well, Abe—just bear in mind that there are always two professions open to people who fail at everything else: there's school-teaching, and there's politics.

ABE. Then I'll choose school-teaching. You go into politics, and you may get elected.

MENTOR. Yes—there's always that possibility.

ABE. And if you get elected, you've got to go to the city. I don't want none of that.

MENTOR. What did I say about two negatives?

ABE. I meant, any of that.

MENTOR. What's your objection to cities, Abe? Have you ever seen one?

ABE. Sure. I've been down river twice to New Orleans. And, do you know, every minute of the time I was there, I was scared?

MENTOR. Scared of what, Abe?

ABE. Well—it sounds kind of foolish—I was scared of people.

MENTOR (*laughs*). Did you imagine they'd rob you of all your gold and jewels?

ABE (*serious*). No. I was scared they'd kill me.

MENTOR (*also serious*). Why? Why should they want to kill you?

ABE. I don't know.

MENTOR (*after a moment*). You think a lot about death, don't you?

ABE. I've had to, because it has always seemed to be so close to me—always—as far back as I can remember. When I was no higher than this table, we buried my mother. The milksick got her, poor creature. I helped Paw make the coffin—whittled the pegs for it with my own jackknife. We buried her in a timber clearing beside my grandmother, old Betsy Sparrow. I used to go

there often and look at the place—used to watch the deer running over her grave with their little feet. I never could kill a deer after that. One time I caught hell from Paw because when he was taking aim I knocked his gun up. And I always compare the looks of those deer with the looks of men—like the men in New Orleans—that you could see had murder in their hearts.

MENTOR (*after a moment*). You're a hopeless mess of inconsistency, Abe Lincoln.

ABE. How do you mean, Mentor?

MENTOR. I've never seen anyone who is so friendly and at the same time so misanthropic.

ABE. What's that?

MENTOR. A misanthrope is one who distrusts men and avoids their society.

ABE. Well—maybe that's how I am. Oh—I like people, well enough—when you consider 'em one by one. But they seem to look different when they're put into crowds, or mobs, or armies. But I came here to listen to you, and then I do all the talking.

MENTOR. Go right on, Abe. I'll correct you when you say things like "caught hell."

ABE (*grins*). I know. Whenever I get talking about Paw, I sort of fall back into his language. But—you've got your own school to teach tomorrow. I'll get along. (*He stands up.*)

MENTOR. Wait a minute. . . . (*He is fishing about among the papers. He takes out a copy of an English magazine.*) There's just one more thing I want to show you. It's a poem. (*He finds the place in the magazine.*) Here it is. You read it, Abe. (*He hands ABE the magazine.*)

[ABE *seats himself on the edge of the table, and holds the magazine under the light.*]

ABE (*reads*). "'On Death,' written at the age of nineteen by the late John Keats:

'Can death be sleep, when life is but a dream,
And scenes of bliss pass as a phantom by?
The transient (*he hesitates on that word*) pleasures as a vision seem,
And yet we think the greatest pain's to die.

[*He moves closer to the light.*]

How strange it is that man on earth should roam,
And lead a life of woe, but not forsake
His rugged path—nor dare he view alone
His future doom—which is but to awake.' "

(*He looks at MENTOR.*) That sure is good, Mentor. It's *fine!* (*He is reading it again, to himself, when the lights fade.*)

END OF SCENE I

ACT ONE—SCENE II

THE RUTLEDGE TAVERN, *New Salem*. Noon on the Fourth of July.

It is a large room, with log walls, but with curtains on the windows and pictures on the walls to give it an air of dressiness. The pictures include likenesses of all the presidents from Washington to Jackson, and there is also a picture (evidently used for campaign purposes) of Henry Clay.

At the left is a door leading to the kitchen. At the back, toward the right, is the main entrance, which is open. The sun is shining brightly.

The furniture of the room consists of two tables, two benches, and various chairs and stools.

BEN MATTLING *is seated on a bench at the rear of the room. He is an ancient, paunchy, watery-eyed veteran of the Revolution, and he wears a cocked hat and the tattered but absurd semblance of a Colonial uniform.* JUDGE BOWLING GREEN and NINIAN EDWARDS *come in, followed by JOSHUA SPEED. BOWLING is elderly, fat, gentle. NINIAN is young, tall, handsome, prosperous. JOSH is quiet, mild, solid, thoughtful, well dressed.*

BOWLING (*as they come in*). This is the Rutledge Tavern, Mr. Edwards. It's not precisely a gilded palace of refreshment.

NINIAN. Make no apologies, Judge Green. As long as the whiskey is wet.

[JOSH *has crossed to the door at the left. He calls off.*]

JOSH. Miss Rutledge.

ANN (*appearing at the door*). Yes, Mr. Speed?

JOSH. Have you seen Abe Lincoln?

ANN. No. He's probably down at the foot races. (*She goes back into the kitchen. JOSH turns to BOWLING.*)

JOSH. I'll find Abe and bring him here.

NINIAN. Remember, Josh, we've got to be back in Springfield before sun-down.

[JOSH *has gone out.*]

BOWLING (*to MATTLING*). Ah, good day, Uncle Ben. Have a seat, Mr. Edwards.

[*They cross to the table at the right.*]

BEN. Good day to you, Bowling.

[ANN *comes in from the kitchen.*]

ANN. Hello, Judge Green.

BOWLING. Good morning, Ann. We'd be grateful for a bottle of your father's best whiskey.

ANN. Yes, Judge. (*She starts to go off.*)

BEN (*stopping her*). And git me another mug of that Barbadoes rum.

ANN. I'm sorry, Mr. Mattling, but I've given you one already and you know my father said you weren't to have any more till you paid for . . .

BEN. Yes, wench—I know what your father said. But if a veteran of the

Revolutionary War is to be denied so much as credit, then this country has forgot its gratitude to them that made it.

BOWLING. Bring him the rum, Ann. I'll be happy to pay for it.

[TRUM COGDAL *comes in. He is elderly, persnickety.*]

BEN (*reluctantly*). I have to say thank you, Judge.

TRUM. Ann, bring me a pot of Sebago tea.

ANN. Yes, Mr. Cogdal. (*She goes out at the left. TRUM sits down at the table.*)

BOWLING. Don't say a word, Ben.

TRUM. Well, Mr. Edwards—what's your impression of our great and enterprising metropolis?

NINIAN. Distinctly favorable, Mr. Cogdal. I could not fail to be impressed by the beauty of your location, here on this hilltop, in the midst of the prairie land.

TRUM. Well, we're on the highroad to the West—and when we get the rag, tag and bob-tail cleaned out of here, we'll grow. Yes, sir—we'll grow!

NINIAN (*politely*). I'm sure of it.

[ANN *has returned with the whiskey, rum and tea.*]

BOWLING. Thank you, Ann.

ANN. Has the mud-wagon come in yet?

TRUM. No. I been waiting for it.

BOWLING. Not by any chance expecting a letter, are you, Ann?

ANN. Oh, no—who'd be writing to *me*, I'd like to know?

BOWLING. Well—you never can tell what might happen on the Fourth of July. (*He and NINIAN lift their glasses.*) But I beg to wish you all happiness, my dear. And let me tell you that Mr. Edwards here is a married man, so you can keep those lively eyes to yourself.

ANN (*giggles*). Oh, Judge Green—you're just joking me! (*She goes to the kitchen.*)

NINIAN. A mighty pretty girl.

TRUM. Comes of good stock, too.

NINIAN. With the scarcity of females in these parts, it's a wonder someone hasn't snapped her up.

BOWLING. Someone has. The poor girl promised herself to a man who called himself McNiel—it turned out his real name's McNamar. Made some money out here and then left town, saying he'd return soon. She's still waiting for him. But your time is short, Mr. Edwards, so if you tell us just what it is you want in New Salem, we'll do our utmost to . . .

NINIAN. I'm sure you gentlemen know what I want.

TRUM. Naturally, you want votes. Well—you've got mine. Anything to frustrate that tyrant, Andy Jackson. (*He shakes a finger at the picture of ANDREW JACKSON.*)

NINIAN. I assure you that I yield to none in my admiration for the character of our venerable president, but when he goes to the extent of ruining our banking structure, destroying faith in our currency and even driving sovereign states to the point of secession, then, gentlemen, it is time to call a halt.

BOWLING. We got two more years of him—if the old man lives that long. You can't make headway against his popularity.

NINIAN. But we can start now to drive out his minions here in the government of the state of Illinois. We have a great battle cry, "End the reign of Andrew Jackson."

[JACK ARMSTRONG and three others of the Clary's Grove boys have come in during this speech. The others are named BAB, FEARGUS and JASP. They are the town bullies—boisterous, good-natured but tough.]

JACK (going to the door at the left). Miss Rutledge!

ANN (appearing in the doorway). What do you want, Jack Armstrong?

JACK. Your humble pardon, Miss Rutledge, and we will trouble you for a keg of liquor.

BAB. And we'll be glad to have it quick, because we're powerful dry.

ANN. You get out of here—you get out of here right now—you low *scum*!

JACK. I believe I said a keg of liquor. Did you hear me say it, boys?

FEARGUS. That's how it sounded to me, Jack.

JASP. Come along with it, Annie—

ANN. If my father were here, he'd take a gun to you, just as he would to a pack of prairie wolves.

JACK. If your Paw was here, he'd be scareder than you. 'Cause he knows we're the wildcats of Clary's Grove, worse'n any old wolves, and we're a-howlin', and a-spittin' for drink. So get the whiskey, Miss Annie, and save your poor old Paw a lot of expenses for damages to his property.

[ANN goes.]

TRUM (in an undertone to NINIAN). That's the rag, tag and bobtail I was . . .

JACK. And what are you mumblin' about, old measely-weasely Trum Cogdal—with your cup of tea on the Fourth of July?

BAB. He's a cotton-mouthed traitor and I think we'd better whip him for it.

FEARGUS (at the same time). Squeeze that air tea outen him, Jack.

JASP (shouting). Come on you, Annie, with that liquor!

JACK. And you, too, old fat-pot Judge Bowling Green that sends honest men to prison—and who's the stranger? Looks kind of damn elegant for New Salem.

BOWLING. This is Mr. Ninian Edwards of Springfield, Jack—and for the Lord's sake, shut up, and sit down, and behave yourselves.

JACK. Ninian Edwards, eh! The Governor's son, I presume. Well—well!

NINIAN (amiably). You've placed me.

JACK. No wonder you've got a New Orleans suit of clothes and a gold fob and a silver-headed cane. I reckon you can buy the best of everything with that steamin' old pirate land-grabber for a Paw. I guess them fancy pockets of yours are pretty well stuffed with the money your Paw stole from us taxpayers—eh, Mr. Edwards?

BAB. Let's take it offen him, Jack.

FEARGUS. Let's give him a lickin', Jack.

JACK (*still to NINIAN*). What you come here for anyway? Lookin' for a fight? Because if that's what you're a-cravin', I'm your man—wrasslin', clawin', bitin', and tearin'.

ANN (*coming in*). Jack Armstrong, here's your liquor! Drink it and go away. (*ANN carries four mugs.*)

JASP. He told you to bring a keg!

JACK (*contemplating the mugs*). One little noggin apiece? Why—that ain't enough to fill a hollow tooth! Get the keg, Annie.

FEARGUS. Perhaps she can't tote it. I'll get it, Jack. (*He goes out into the kitchen.*)

ANN (*desperate*). Aren't there any of you men can do anything to protect decent people from these ruffians?

NINIAN. I'll be glad to do whatever I . . . (*He starts to rise.*)

BOWLING (*restraining him*). I'd be rather careful, Mr. Edwards.

JACK. That's right, Mr. Edwards. You be careful. Listen to the old Squire. He's got a round pot but a level head. He's seen the Clary's Grove boys in action, and he can tell you you might get that silver-headed cane rammed down your gullet. Hey, Bab—you tell him what we did to Hank Spears and Gus Hocheimer. Just tell him!

BAB. Jack nailed the two of 'em up in a barr'l and sent 'em rollin' down Salem hill and it jumped the bank and fotch'd up in the river and when we opened up the barr'l they wasn't inclined to move much.

JACK. Of course, it'd take a bigger barr'l to hold you and your friend here, Squire, but I'd do it for you and I'd do it for any by God rapsCALLIONS and sons of thieves that come here a-preachin' treachery and disunion and pisenin' the name of Old Hickory, the people's friend.

[FEARGUS returns with the keg.]

BEN. Kill him, boys! You're the only *real* Americans we got left!

NINIAN (*rising*). If you gentlemen will step outside, I'll be glad to accommodate you with the fight you seem to be spoiling for.

TRUM. You're committing suicide, Mr. Edwards.

JACK. Oh, no—he ain't. We ain't killers—we're just bone crushers. After a few months, you'll be as good as new, which ain't saying much. You bring that keg, Feargus.

[*They are about to go when ABE appears in the door. He now is slightly more respectably dressed, wearing a battered claw-hammer coat and pants that have been "foxed" with buckskin. He carries the mail. Behind him is*
JOSH SPEED.]

ABE. The mud-wagon's in! Hello, Jack. Hello, boys. Ain't you fellers drunk yet? Hello, Miss Ann. Got a letter for you. (*There is a marked shyness in his attitude toward ANN.*)

ANN. Thank you, Abe. (*She snatches the letter and runs out with it.*)

BEN. Abe, there's goin' to be a fight!

NINIAN (*to JACK*). Well—come on, if you're coming.

JACK. All right, boys.

ABE. Fight? Who—and why?

JACK. This is the son of Ninian Edwards, Abe. Come from Springfield lookin' for a little crotch hoist and I'm aimin' to oblige.

[ABE looks NINIAN over.]

BOWLING. Put a stop to it, Abe. It'd be next door to murder.

JACK. You shut your trap, Pot Green. Murder's too good for any goose-livered enemy of Andy Jackson. Come on, boys!

ABE. Wait a minute, boys. Jack, have you forgotten what day it is?

JACK. No, I ain't! But I reckon the Fourth is as good a day as any to whip a politician!

ABE (*amiably*). Well, if you've just got to fight, Jack, you shouldn't give preference to strangers. Being post-master of this thriving town, I can rate as a politician, myself, so you'd better try a fall with me— (*He thrusts JACK aside and turns to NINIAN.*) And as for you, sir, I haven't the pleasure of your acquaintance; but my name's Lincoln, and I'd like to shake hands with a brave man.

NINIAN (*shaking hands with ABE*). I'm greatly pleased to know you, Mr. Lincoln.

ABE. You should be. Because I come here just in time to save you quite some embarrassment, not to mention injury. Oh, got a couple of letters for you, Bowling. And here's your *Cincinnati Journal*, Trum.

JACK. Look here, Abe—you're steppin' into something that ain't none of your business. This is a private matter of patriotic honor.

ABE. Everything in this town is my business, Jack. It's the only kind of business I've got. And besides—I saw Hannah down by the grove and she says to tell you to come on to the picnic and that means *now* or she'll give the cake away to the Straders children and you and the boys'll go hungry. So get moving.

FEARGUS (*to JACK*). Are you goin' to let Abe talk you out of it?

ABE. Sure he is. (*He turns to TRUM.*) Say, Trum—if you ain't using that *Journal* for a while, would you let me have a read?

TRUM. By all means, Abe. Here you are. (*He tosses the paper to ABE.*)

ABE. Thanks. (*He turns again to JACK.*) You'd better hurry, Jack, or you'll get a beating from Hannah. (*He starts to take the wrapper off, as he goes over to a chair at the left. JACK looks at ABE for a moment, then laughs.*)

JACK (*to NINIAN*). All right! Abe Lincoln's saved your hide. I'll consent to callin' off the fight just because he's a friend of mine.

ABE (*as he sits*). And also because I'm the only one around here you can't lick.

JACK. But I just want to tell you, Mr. Ninian Edwards, Junior, that the next time you come around here a-spreadin' pisen . . .

ABE. Go on, Jack. Hannah's waiting.

JACK (*walking over to ABE*). I'm going, Abe. But I warn you—you'd better stop this foolishness of readin'—readin'—readin', mornin', noon and night, or you'll be gettin' soft and you won't be the same fightin' man you are now—and it would break my heart to see you licked by anybody, includin' me! (*He laughs, slaps ABE on the back, then turns to go.*) Glad to have met you, Mr.

Edwards. (*He goes out, followed by BAB and JASP. FEARGUS picks up the keg and starts after them.*)

NINIAN (*to JACK*). It's been a pleasure.

ABE. Where'd you get that keg, Feargus?

FEARGUS (*nervously*). Jack told me to take it outen Mis' Rutledge's kitchen and I . . .

ABE. Well—put it down. . . . If you see Seth Gale, tell him I've got a letter for him.

FEARGUS. I'll tell him, Abe. (*FEARGUS puts down the keg and goes. JOSH SPEED laughs and comes up to the table.*)

JOSH. Congratulations, Ninian. I shouldn't have enjoyed taking you home to Mrs. Edwards after those boys had done with you.

NINIAN (*grinning*). I was aware of the certain consequences, Josh. (*He turns to ABE.*) I'm deeply in your debt, Mr. Lincoln.

ABE. Never mind any thanks, Mr. Edwards. Jack Armstrong talks big but he means well.

NINIAN. Won't you join us in a drink?

ABE. No, thank you. (*He's reading the paper. BOWLING fills the glasses.*)

BOWLING. I'm going to have another! I don't mind telling you, I'm still trembling. (*He hands a glass to NINIAN, then drinks himself.*)

TRUM. You see, Mr. Edwards. It's that very kind of lawlessness that's holding our town back.

NINIAN. You'll find the same element in the capital of our nation, and everywhere else, these days. (*He sits down and drinks.*)

ABE. Say, Bowling! It says here that there was a riot in Lyons, France. (*He reads.*) "A mob of men, deprived of employment when textile factories installed the new sewing machines, re-enacted scenes of the Reign of Terror in the streets of this prosperous industrial center. The mobs were suppressed only when the military forces of His French Majesty took a firm hand. The rioters carried banners inscribed with the incendiary words, 'We will live working or die fighting!'" (*ABE looks at the group at the right.*) That's Revolution!

BOWLING. Maybe, but it's a long way off from New Salem.

JOSH. Put the paper down, Abe. We want to talk to you.

ABE. Me? What about? (*He looks curiously at JOSH, BOWLING and NINIAN.*)

JOSH. I brought Mr. Edwards here for the sole purpose of meeting you—and with his permission, I shall tell you why.

NINIAN. Go right ahead, Josh.

[*All are looking intently at ABE.*]

JOSH. Abe—how would you like to run for the State Assembly?

ABE. When?

JOSH. Now—for the election in the fall.

ABE. Why?

NINIAN. Mr. Lincoln, I've known you for only a few minutes, but that's long enough to make me agree with Josh Speed that you're precisely the type of man we want. The whole Whig organization will support your candidacy.

ABE. This was all your idea, Josh?

JOSH (*smiling*). Oh, no, Abe—you're the people's choice!

TRUM. What do *you* think of it, Bowling?

BOWLING (*heartily*). I think it's as fine a notion as I ever heard. Why, Abe—I can hear you making speeches, right and left, taking your stand on all the issues—secession, Texas, the National Bank crisis, abolitionism—it'll be more fun than we ever had in our lives!

ABE (*rising*). Isn't anybody going to ask what *I* think?

JOSH (*laughs*). All right, Abe—I'll ask you.

ABE (*after a moment's pause*). It's a comical notion, all right—and I don't know if I can give you an answer to it, offhand. But my first, hasty impression is that I don't think much of it.

BOWLING. Don't overlook the fact that, if elected, your salary would be three whole dollars a day.

ABE. That's fine money. No doubt of that. And I see what you have in mind, Bowling. I owe you a considerable sum of money; and if I stayed in the legislature for, say, twenty years, I'd be able to pay off—let me see—two dollars and a half a day. . . . (*He is figuring it up on his fingers.*)

BOWLING. I'm not thinking about the debts, Abe.

ABE. I know you ain't, Bowling. But I've got to. And so should you, Mr. Edwards. The Whig Party is the party of sound money and God save the National Bank, ain't it?

NINIAN. Why, yes—among other things. . . .

ABE. Well, then—how would it look if you put forward a candidate who has demonstrated no earning power but who has run up the impressive total of fifteen hundred dollars of debts?

BOWLING (*to NINIAN*). I can tell you something about those debts. Abe started a grocery store in partnership with an unfortunate young man named Berry. Their stock included whiskey, and Berry started tapping the keg until he had consumed all the liquid assets. So the store went bankrupt—and Abe voluntarily assumed all the obligations. That may help to explain to you, Mr. Edwards, why we think pretty highly of him around here.

NINIAN. It's a sentiment with which I concur most heartily.

ABE. I thank you one and all for your kind tributes, but don't overdo them, or I'll begin to think that three dollars a day ain't enough!

JOSH. What's the one thing that you want most, Abe? You want to learn. This will give you your chance to get at a good library, to associate with the finest lawyers in the State.

ABE. I've got a copy of Blackstone, already. Found it in an old junk barrel. And how can I tell that the finest lawyers would welcome association with *me*?

NINIAN. You needn't worry about that. I saw how you dealt with those ruffians. You quite obviously know how to handle men.

ABE. I can handle the Clary's Grove boys because I can outwrasse them—but I can't go around Sangamon County throwing *all* the voters.

BOWLING (*laughing*). I'll take a chance on that, Abe.

ABE (*to NINIAN*). Besides—how do you know that my political views would agree with yours? How do you know I wouldn't say the wrong thing?

NINIAN. What *are* your political leanings, Mr. Lincoln?

ABE. They're all toward staying out. . . . What sort of leanings did you want?

NINIAN. We have a need for good conservative men to counteract all the radical firebrands that have swept over this country in the wake of Andrew Jackson. We've got to get this country back to first principles!

ABE. Well—I'm conservative, all right. If I got into the legislature you'd never catch me starting any movements for reform or progress. I'm pretty certain I wouldn't even have the nerve to open my mouth.

JOSH (*laughs*). I told you, Ninian—he's just the type of candidate you're looking for.

[NINIAN *laughs too, and rises.*]

NINIAN (*crossing toward ABE*). The fact is, Mr. Lincoln, we want to spike the rumor that ours is the party of the more privileged classes. That is why we seek men of the plain people for candidates. As post-master, you're in an excellent position to establish contacts. While delivering letters, you can also deliver speeches and campaign literature, with which our headquarters will keep you supplied.

ABE. Would you supply me with a suit of store clothes? A candidate mustn't look *too* plain.

NINIAN (*smiling*). I think even that could be arranged, eh, Judge?

BOWLING. I think so.

NINIAN (*pompously*). So—think it over, Mr. Lincoln, and realize that this is opportunity unlimited in scope. Just consider what it means to be starting up the ladder in a nation which is now expanding southward, across the vast area of Texas; and westward, to the Empire of the Californias on the Pacific Ocean. We're becoming a continent, Mr. Lincoln—and all that we need is men! (*He looks at his watch.*) And now, gentlemen, if you will excuse me—I must put in an appearance at the torch-light procession in Springfield this evening, so I shall have to be moving on. Good-bye, Mr. Lincoln. This meeting has been a happy one for me.

ABE (*shaking hands*). Good-bye, Mr. Edwards. Good luck in the campaign.

NINIAN. And the same to you.

[*All at the right have risen and are starting to go, except BEN MATTLING, who is still sitting at the back, drinking.*]

ABE. Here's your paper, Trum.

TRUM. Go ahead and finish it, Abe. I won't be looking at it yet awhile.

ABE. Thanks, Trum. I'll leave it at your house.

[TRUM and NINIAN *have gone.*]

BOWLING. I'll see you later, Abe. Tell Ann I'll be back to pay for the liquor.

ABE. I'll tell her, Bowling.

[BOWLING *goes. JOSH is looking at ABE, who, after a moment, turns to him.*]

ABE. I'm surprised at you, Josh. I thought you were my friend.

JOSH. I know, Abe. But Ninian Edwards asked me is there anybody in that

God-forsaken town of New Salem that stands a chance of getting votes, and the only one I could think of was you. I can see you're embarrassed by this—and you're annoyed. But—whether you like it or not—you've got to grow; and here's your chance to get a little scrap of importance.

ABE. Am I the kind that wants importance?

JOSH. You'll deny it, Abe—but you've got a funny kind of vanity—which is the same as saying you've got some pride—and it's badly in need of nourishment. So, if you'll agree to this—I don't think you'll be sorry for it or feel that I've betrayed you.

ABE (*grins*). Oh—I won't hold it against you, Josh. (*He walks away and looks out the door.*) But that Mr. Ninian Edwards—he's rich and he's prominent and he's got a high-class education. Politics to him is just a kind of a game. And maybe I'd like it if I could play it *his* way. (*He turns to JOSH.*) But when you get to reading Blackstone, not to mention the Bible, you can't help feeling maybe there's some serious responsibility in the giving of laws—and maybe there's something more important in the business of government than just getting the Whig Party back into power.

[SETH GALE *comes in. He is a young, husky frontiersman, with flashes of the sun of Western empire in his eyes.*]

SETH. Hey, Abe—Feargus said you've got a letter for me.

ABE (*fishing in his mail pouch*). Yes.

SETH. Hello, Mr. Speed.

JOSH. How are you, Mr. Gale?

ABE. Here you are, Seth. (*He hands him a letter. SETH takes it to the right, sits down and starts to read.*)

JOSH. I've got to get home to Springfield, Abe, but I'll be down again in a week or so.

ABE. I'll be here, Josh.

[JOSH *goes. ABE sits down again at the right, picks up his paper, but doesn't read it. BEN stands up and comes down a bit unsteadily.*]

BEN (*angrily*). Are you going to do it, Abe? Are you goin' to let them make you into a *candidate*?

ABE. I ain't had time to think about it yet.

BEN. Well—I tell you to stop thinkin' before it's too late. Don't let 'em get you. Don't let 'em put you in a store suit that's the uniform of degradation in this miserable country. You're an honest man, Abe Lincoln. You're a good-for-nothin', debt-ridden loafer—but you're an honest man. And you have no place in that den of thieves that's called gov'ment. They'll corrupt you as they've corrupted the whole damn United States. Look at Washington, look at Jefferson, and John Adams—(*He points grandly to the pictures.*)—where are they today? Dead! And everything they stood for and fought for and *won*—that's dead too. (*ANN comes in to collect the mugs from the table at the left. ABE looks at her.*) Why—we'd be better off if we was all black niggers held in the bonds of slavery. *They* get fed—they get looked after when they're old and sick. (*ANN goes.*) But *you* don't care—you ain't listenin' to me, neither . . . (*He starts slowly toward the door.*)

ABE. Of course I'm listening, Ben.

BEN. No, you ain't. *I know.* You're goin' to the assembly and join the wolves who're feedin' off the carcass of Liberty. (*He goes out.*)

ABE. You needn't worry. I'm not going.

[ANN comes in. She crosses to the right to pick up the glasses. She seems extremely subdued. ABE looks at her, curiously.]

ABE. Bowling Green said to tell you he'd be back later, to pay you what he OWES.

ANN (*curtly*). That's all right. (ANN puts the glasses and bottle on a tray and picks it up. ABE jumps to his feet.)

ABE. Here, Ann. Let me take that.

ANN (*irritably*). No—leave it alone! I can carry it! (*She starts across to the left.*)

ABE. Excuse me, Ann. . . .

ANN (*stopping*). Well?

ABE. Would you come back after you're finished with that? I—I'd like to talk to you.

[SETH has finished the letter. Its contents seem to have depressed him.]

ANN. All right. I'll talk to you—if you want.

[She goes out. SETH crosses toward ABE, who, during the subsequent dialogue, is continually looking toward the kitchen.]

SETH. Abe . . . Abe—I got a letter from my folks back in Maryland. It means—I guess I've got to give up the dream we had of moving out into Nebraska territory.

ABE. What's happened, Seth?

SETH (*despondently*). Well—for one thing, the old man's took sick, and he's pretty feeble.

ABE. I'm sorry to hear that.

SETH. So am I. They've sent for me to come back and work the farm. Measly little thirty-six acres—sandy soil. I tell you, Abe, it's a bitter disappointment to me, when I had my heart all set on going out into the West. And the worst of it is—I'm letting you down on it, too.

ABE (*with a glance toward the kitchen*). Don't think about that, Seth. Maybe I won't be able to move for a while myself. And when your father gets to feeling better, you'll come back . . .

SETH. He won't get to feeling better. Not at his age. I'll be stuck there, just like he was. I'll be pushed in and cramped all the rest of my life, till the malaria gets me, too. . . . Well—there's no use crying about it. If I've got to go back East, I've got to go. (ANN comes back.) I'll tell you good-bye, Abe, before I leave.

[He goes. ABE turns and looks at ANN, and she at him.]

ANN. Well—what is it, Abe?

ABE (*rising*). I just thought—you might like to talk to me.

ANN (*sharply*). What about?

ABE. That letter you got from New York State.

ANN. What do you know about that letter?

ABE. I'm the post-master. I know more than I ought to about people's private affairs. I couldn't help seeing that that was the handwriting of Mr. McNiel. And I couldn't help seeing, from the look on your face, that the bad news you've been afraid of has come.

[ANN looks at him with surprise. He is a lot more observant than she had thought.]

ANN. Whatever the letter said, it's no concern of yours, Abe.

ABE. I know that, Ann. But—it appears to me that you've been crying—and it makes me sad to think that something could have hurt you. The thing is—I think quite a lot of you—always have—ever since I first came here, and met you. I wouldn't mention it, only when you're distressed about something it's a comfort sometimes to find a pair of ears to pour your troubles into—and the Lord knows my ears are big enough to hold a lot.

[Her attitude of hostility softens and she rewards him with a tender smile.]

ANN. You're a Christian gentleman, Abe Lincoln. (She sits down.)

ABE. No, I ain't. I'm a plain, common sucker with a shirt-tail so short I can't sit on it.

ANN (laughs). Well—sit down, anyway, Abe—here, by me.

ABE. Why—it'd be a pleasure. (He crosses and sits near her.)

ANN. You can always say something to make a person laugh, can't you?

ABE. Well—I don't even have to say anything. A person just has to look at me.

ANN. You're right about that letter, Abe. It's the first I've heard from him in months—and now he says he's delayed by family troubles and doesn't know when he'll be able to get to New Salem again. By which he probably means—never.

ABE. I wouldn't say that, Ann.

ANN. I would. (She looks at him.) I reckon you think I'm a silly fool for ever having promised myself to Mr. McNiel.

ABE. I think no such thing. I liked him myself, and still do, and whatever reasons he had for changing his name I'm sure were honorable. He's a smart man, and a handsome one—and I—I wouldn't blame any girl for—loving him.

ANN (too emphatically). I guess I don't love him, Abe. I guess I couldn't love anybody that was as—as faithless as that.

ABE (trying to appear unconcerned). Well, then. There's nothing to fret about. Now—poor Seth Gale—he got some *really* bad news. His father's sick and he has to give up his dream which was to go and settle out West.

ANN (looks at him). I don't believe you know much about females, Abe.

ABE. Probably I don't—although I certainly spend enough time thinking about 'em.

ANN. You're a big man, and you can lick anybody, and you can't understand the feelings of somebody who is weak. But—I'm a female, and I can't help thinking what they'll be saying about me—all the old gossips, all over town. They'll make it out that he deserted me; I'm a rejected woman. They'll give me their sympathy to my face, but they'll snigger at me behind my back. (She rises and crosses toward the right.)

ABE. Yes—that's just about what they would do. But—would you let *them* disturb you?

ANN (*rising*). I told you—it's just weakness—it's just vanity. It's something you couldn't understand, Abe.

[*She has crossed to the window and is staring out. ABE twists in his chair to look at her.*]

ABE. Maybe I can understand it, Ann. I've got a kind of vanity myself. Josh Speed said so, and he's right. . . . It's—it's nothing but vanity that's kept me from declaring my inclinations toward you. (*She turns, amazed, and looks at him.*) You see, I don't like to be sniggered at, either. I know what I am—and I know what I look like—and I know that I've got nothing to offer any girl that I'd be in love with.

ANN. Are you saying that you're in love with me, Abe?

ABE (*with deep earnestness*). Yes—I am saying that. (*He stands up, facing her. She looks intently into his eyes.*) I've been loving you—a long time—with all my heart. You see, Ann—you're a particularly fine girl. You've got sense, and you've got bravery—those are two things that I admire particularly. And you're powerful good to look at, too. So—it's only natural I should have a great regard for you. But—I don't mean to worry you about it, Ann. I only mentioned it because—if you would do me the honor of keeping company with me for a while, it might shut the old gossips' mouths. They'd figure you'd chucked McNiel for—for someone else. Even me.

ANN (*going to him*). I thought I knew you pretty well, Abe. But I didn't.

ABE (*worried*). Why do you say that? Do you consider I was too forward, in speaking out as I did?

ANN (*gravely*). No, Abe. . . . I've always thought a lot of you—the way I thought you were. But—the idea of love between you and me—I can't say how I feel about that, because now you're like some other person, that I'm meeting for the first time.

ABE (*quietly*). I'm not expecting you to feel anything for me. I'd never dream of expecting such a thing.

ANN. I know that, Abe. You'd be willing to give everything you have and never expect anything in return. Maybe you're different in that way from any man I've ever heard of. And I can tell you this much—now, and truthfully—if I ever do love you, I'll be happy about it—and lucky, to be loving a good, decent man. . . . If you just give me time—to think about it. . . .

ABE (*unable to believe his eyes and ears*). You mean—if you took time—you might get in your heart something like the feeling I have for you?

ANN (*with great tenderness*). I don't know, Abe. (*She clutches his lapel.*) But I do know that you're a man who could fill anyone's heart—yes, fill it and warm it and make it glad to be living.

[*ABE covers her hand with his.*]

ABE. Ann—I've always tried hard to believe what the orators tell us—that this is a land of equal opportunity for all. But I've never been able to credit it, any more than I could agree that God made all men in his own image. But—if I could win you, Ann—I'd be willing to disbelieve everything I've ever seen

with my own eyes, and have faith in everything wonderful that I've ever read in poetry books. (*Both are silent for a moment. Then ANN turns away.*) But—I'm not asking you to say anything now. And I won't ask you until the day comes when I know I've got a right to. (*He turns and walks quickly toward the door, picking up his mail pouch.*)

ANN. Abe! Where are you going?

ABE. I'm going to find Bowling Green and tell him a good joke. (*He grins. He is standing in the doorway.*)

ANN. A joke? What about?

ABE. I'm going to tell him that I'm a candidate for the assembly of the State of Illinois. (*He goes.*)

[*The light fades.*]

END OF SCENE II

ACT ONE—SCENE III

BOWLING GREEN'S house near New Salem.

It is a small room, but the walls are lined with books and family pictures. In the center is a table with a lamp on it. Another light—a candle in a glass globe—is on a bureau at the right. There are comfortable chairs on either side of the table, and a sofa at the left.

At the back, toward the left, is the front door. A rifle is leaning against the wall by the door. There is another door in the right wall. Toward the right, at the back, is a ladder fixed against the wall leading up through an opening to the attic.

It is late in the evening, a year or so after Scene II. A storm is raging outside.

BOWLING is reading aloud from a sort of pamphlet. His comfortable wife, NANCY, is listening and sewing.

BOWLING. "And how much more interesting did the spectacle become when, starting into full life and animation, as a simultaneous call for 'Pickwick' burst from his followers, that illustrious man slowly mounted into the Windsor chair, on which he had been previously seated, and addressed the club himself had founded."

[BOWLING chuckles. NANCY laughs.]

NANCY. He sounds precisely like you, Bowling.

[*There is a knock at the door.*]

NANCY (*nervous*). That's not Abe's knock. Who can it be?

BOWLING (*rising*). We don't know yet, my dear.

NANCY. It's a strange hour for anyone to be calling. You'd better have that gun ready.

[BOWLING unbolts and opens the door. It is JOSH SPEED.]

BOWLING. Why—Josh Speed!

JOSH. Good evening, Bowling.

BOWLING. We haven't seen you in a coon's age.

NANCY. Good evening, Mr. Speed.

JOSH. Good evening, Mrs. Green. And I beg you to forgive me for this untimely intrusion.

NANCY. We're delighted to see you. Take your wrap off.

JOSH. Thank you. I've just come down from Springfield. I heard Abe Lincoln was in town and I was told I might find him here.

BOWLING. He's been sleeping here, up in the attic.

NANCY. But he's out now at the Rutledge Farm, tending poor little Ann.

JOSH. Miss Rutledge? What's the matter with her?

NANCY. She's been taken with the brain sickness. It's the most shocking thing. People have been dying from it right and left.

BOWLING. But Ann's young. She'll pull through, all right. Sit down, Josh.

JOSH. Thank you. (*He sits. BOWLING places the pamphlet on the top of the bookcase and stands there, filling his pipe.*)

NANCY. I suppose you know that Abe came rushing down from Vandalia the moment he heard she was taken. He's deeply in love with her.

BOWLING. Now, Nancy—don't exaggerate.

[JOSH is listening to all this, intently.]

JOSH. So Abe is in love. I wondered what has been the matter with him lately.

NANCY. Why, it's written all over his poor, homely face.

JOSH. The last time I saw him, he seemed pretty moody. But when I asked him what was wrong, he said it was his liver.

BOWLING (*laughing*). That sounds more likely. Has he been getting on well in the Assembly?

JOSH. No. He has just been sitting there—drawing his three dollars a day—and taking no apparent interest in the proceedings. Do you fancy that Miss Rutledge cares anything for him?

NANCY. Indeed she does! She broke her promise to that Mr. McNiel because of her feelings for Abe!

JOSH. Has he any notion of marrying her?

NANCY. It's the only notion of his life right now. And the sooner they are married, the better for both of them.

BOWLING (*seating himself*). Better for her, perhaps—but the worse for him.

NANCY (*finishing her sewing*). And why? The Rutledges are fine people, superior in every way to those riffraff Hankses and Lincolns that are Abe's family!

BOWLING. I think you feel as I do, Josh. Abe has his own way to go and—sweet and pretty as Ann undoubtedly is—she'd only be a hindrance to him.

JOSH. I guess it wouldn't matter much if she could give him a little of the happiness he's never had.

NANCY (*rising*). That's just it! I think as much of Abe as you do, Bowling. But we can't deny that he's a poor man, and he's failed in trade, and he's been in the legislature for a year without accomplishing a blessed thing . . . (*She goes to the bookcase to put her sewing-basket away.*)

BOWLING. He could go to Springfield and set up a law practice and make a good thing of it. Ninian Edwards would help him to get started. And he'd soon forget little Ann. He has just happened to fasten on her his own romantic ideal of what's beautiful and unattainable. Let him ever attain her, and she'd break his heart.

NANCY (*seating herself*). Do you agree with Bowling on that, Mr. Speed?

JOSH (*sadly*). I can't say, Mrs. Green. I've abandoned the attempt to predict anything about Abe Lincoln. The first time I ever saw him was when he was piloting that steamboat, the *Talisman*. You remember how she ran into trouble at the dam. I had a valuable load of goods aboard for my father's store, and I was sure that steamboat, goods and all were a total loss. But Abe got her through. It was a great piece of work. I thought, "Here is a reliable man." So I cultivated his acquaintance, believing, in my conceit, that I could help him to fame and fortune. I soon learned differently. I found out that he has plenty of strength and courage in his body—but in his mind he's a hopeless hypochondriac. He can split rails, push a plow, crack jokes, all day—and then sit up all night reading "Hamlet" and brooding over his own fancied resemblance to that melancholy prince. Maybe he's a great philosopher—maybe he's a great fool. I don't know what he is.

BOWLING (*laughs*). Well—if only Ann had sense enough to see all the things *you* saw, Josh, she'd be so terrified of him she'd run all the way back to York State and find McNiel. At least, *he's* not complicated.

NANCY (*with deeper emotion*). You're talking about Abe Lincoln as if he were some problem that you found in a book, and it's interesting to try to figure it out. Well—maybe he is a problem—but he's also a man, and a miserable one. And what do you do for his misery? You laugh at his comical jokes and you vote for him on election day and give him board and lodging when he needs it. But all that doesn't give a scrap of satisfaction to Abe's soul—and never will. Because the one thing he needs is a woman with the will to face life for him.

BOWLING. You think he's afraid to face it himself?

NANCY. He is! He listens too much to the whispers, that he heard in the forest where he grew up, and where he always goes now when he wants to be alone. They're the whispers of the women behind him—his dead mother—and *her* mother, who was no better than she should be. He's got that awful fear on him, of not knowing what the whispers mean, or where they're directing him. And none of your backslapping will knock that fear out of him. Only a woman can free him—a woman who loves him truly, and believes in him.

[*There is a knock on the door.*]

BOWLING. That's Abe now. (*He gets up and opens it.*)

[*ABE is there, bareheaded, wet by the storm. He now wears a fairly respectable dark suit of clothes. He looks older and grimmer.*]

BOWLING. Why, hello, Abe! We've been sitting up waiting for you. Come on in out of the wet!

[*ABE comes in. BOWLING shuts the door behind him.*]

NANCY. We were reading *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* when Mr. Speed came in.

ABE. Hello, Josh. Glad to see you.

JOSH. Hello, Abe.

[ABE turns to NANCY.]

ABE. Nancy . . .

NANCY. Yes, Abe?

ABE. She's dead.

BOWLING. Ann? She's dead?

ABE. Yes. Tonight, the fever suddenly got worse. They couldn't seem to do anything for it.

[NANCY gives BOWLING a swift look, then goes quickly to ABE and takes his hand.]

NANCY. Oh, Abe—I'm so sorry. She was such a dear little girl. Everyone who knew her will join in mourning for her.

ABE. I know they will. But it won't do any good. She's dead.

BOWLING. Sit down, Abe, and rest yourself.

ABE. No—I'm not fit company for anybody. I'd better be going. (*He turns toward the door.*)

JOSH (*stopping him*). No, you don't, Abe. You'll stay right here.

BOWLING. You better do what Josh tells you.

NANCY. Come here, Abe. Please sit down. (ABE looks from one to the other, then obediently goes to a chair and sits.) Your bed is ready for you upstairs when you want it.

ABE (*dully*). You're the best friends I've got in the world, and it seems a pretty poor way to reward you for all that you've given me, to come here now, and inflict you with a corpse.

BOWLING. This is your home, Abe. This is where you're loved.

ABE. Yes, that's right. And I love you, Bowling and Nancy. But I loved her more than everything else that I've ever known.

NANCY. I know you did, Abe. I know it.

ABE. I used to think it was better to be alone. I was always most contented when I was alone. I had queer notions that if you got too close to people, you could see the truth about them, that behind the surface they're all insane, and they could see the same in you. And then—when I saw her, I knew there could be beauty and purity in people—like the purity you sometimes see in the sky at night. When I took hold of her hand, and held it, all fear, all doubt, went out of me. I believed in God. I'd have been glad to work for her until I die, to get for her everything out of life that she wanted. If she thought I could do it, then I could. That was my belief. . . . And then I had to stand there, as helpless as a twig in a whirlpool; I had to stand there and watch her die. And her father and mother were there, too, praying to God for her soul. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord! That's what they kept on saying. But I couldn't pray with them. I couldn't give any devotion to one who has the power of death, and uses it. (*He has stood up, and is speaking with more passion.*) I'm making a poor exhibition of myself—

and I'm sorry—but—I can't stand it. I can't live with myself any longer. I've got to die and be with her again, or I'll go crazy! (*He goes to the door and opens it. The storm continues.*) I can't bear to think of her out there alone! [NANCY looks at BOWLING with frantic appeal. He goes to ABE, who is standing in the doorway, looking out.]

BOWLING (*with great tenderness*). Abe . . . I want you to go upstairs and see if you can't get some sleep. . . . Please, Abe—as a special favor to Nancy and me.

ABE (*after a moment*). All right, Bowling. (*He turns and goes to the ladder.*)

NANCY. Here's a light for you, dear Abe. (*She hands him the candle.*)

ABE. Thank you, Nancy. . . . Good night. (*He goes up the ladder into the attic.*)

[*They all look up after him.*]

NANCY (*tearful*). Poor, lonely soul.

[BOWLING cautions her to be quiet.]

JOSH. Keep him here with you, Mrs. Green. Don't let him out of your sight.

BOWLING. We won't, Josh.

JOSH. Good night. (*He picks up his hat and cloak and goes.*)

BOWLING. Good night, Josh. (*He closes and bolts the door, then comes down to the table and picks up the lamp.*)

[NANCY looks up once more, then goes out at the right. BOWLING follows her out, carrying the lamp with him. He closes the door behind him, so that the only light on the stage is the beam from the attic.]

CURTAIN

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO—SCENE IV

LAW OFFICE of Stuart and Lincoln on the second floor of the Court House in Springfield, Ill. A sunny summer's afternoon, some five years after the preceding scene.

The room is small, with two windows and one door, upstage, which leads to the hall and staircase.

At the right are a table and chair, at the left an old desk, littered with papers. At the back is a ramshackle bed, with a buffalo robe thrown over it. Below the windows are some rough shelves, sagging with law books. There is an old wood stove.

On the wall above the desk is hung an American flag, with 26 stars. Between the windows is an election poster, for Harrison and Tyler, with a list of Electors, the last of whom is Ab'm Lincoln, of Sangamon.

BILLY HERNDON *is working at the table. He is young, slight, serious-minded, smoldering. He looks up as ABE comes in. ABE wears a battered plug hat, a light alpaca coat, and carries an ancient, threadbare carpet-bag. He is evidently not in a talkative mood. His boots are caked in mud. He is only thirty-one years old, but his youth was buried with Ann Rutledge.*

He leaves the office door open, and lettered on it we see the number, 4, and the firm's name—Stuart & Lincoln, Attorneys & Counsellors at Law.

BILLY. How de do, Mr. Lincoln. Glad to see you back.

ABE. Good day, Billy. (*He sets down the carpet-bag, takes off his hat and puts it on his desk.*)

BILLY. How was it on the circuit, Mr. Lincoln?

ABE. About as usual.

BILLY. Have you been keeping in good health?

ABE. Not particularly. But Doc Henry dosed me enough to keep me going. (*He sits down at the desk and starts looking at letters and papers that have accumulated during his absence. He takes little interest in them, pigeonholing some letters unopened.*)

BILLY. Did you have occasion to make any political speeches?

ABE. Oh—they got me up on the stump a couple of times. Ran into Stephen Douglas—he was out campaigning, of course—and we had some argument in public.

BILLY (*greatly interested*). That's good! What issues did you and Mr. Douglas discuss?

ABE. Now—don't get excited, Billy. We weren't taking it serious. There was no blood shed. . . . What's the news here?

BILLY. Judge Stuart wrote that he arrived safely in Washington and the campaign there is getting almost as hot as the weather. Mrs. Fraim stopped in to say she couldn't possibly pay your fee for a while.

ABE. I should hope not. I ought to be paying her, seeing as I defended her poor husband and he hanged.

[BILLY *hands him a letter and watches him intently, while he reads it.*]

BILLY. That was left here by hand, and I promised to call it especially to your attention. It's from the Elijah P. Lovejoy League of Freemen. They want you to speak at an Abolitionist rally next Thursday evening. It'll be a very important affair.

ABE (*reflectively*). It's funny, Billy—I was thinking about Lovejoy the other day—trying to figure what it is in a man that makes him glad to be a martyr. I was on the boat coming from Quincy to Alton, and there was a gentleman on board with twelve Negroes. He was shipping them down to Vicksburg for sale—had 'em chained six and six together. Each of them had a small iron clevis around his wrist, and this was chained to the main chain, so that those Negroes were strung together precisely like fish on a trot line. I gathered they were being separated forever from their homes—mothers, fathers, wives, children—whatever families the poor creatures had got—going to be whipped

into perpetual slavery, and no questions asked. It was quite a shocking sight.

BILLY (*excitedly*). Then you will give a speech at the Lovejoy rally?

ABE (*wearily*). I doubt it. That Freeman's League is a pack of hell-roaring fanatics. Talk reason to them and they scorn you for being a mealy-mouth. Let 'em make their own noise. (*ABE has opened a letter. He starts to read it.*)

[BILLY looks at him with resentful disappointment, but he knows too well that any argument would be futile. He resumes his work. After a moment, BOWLING GREEN comes in, followed by JOSH SPEED.]

BOWLING. Are we interrupting the majesty of the Law?

ABE (*heartily*). Bowling! (*He jumps up and grasps BOWLING's hand.*) How are you, Bowling?

BOWLING. Tolerably well, Abe—and glad to see you.

ABE. This is Billy Herndon—Squire Green, of New Salem. Hello, Josh.

JOSH. Hello, Abe.

BILLY (*shaking hands with BOWLING*). I'm proud to know you, sir. Mr. Lincoln speaks of you constantly.

BOWLING. Thank you, Mr. Herndon. Are you a lawyer, too?

BILLY (*seriously*). I hope to be, sir. I'm serving here as a clerk in Judge Stuart's absence.

BOWLING. So now you're teaching others, Abe?

ABE. Just providing a bad example.

BOWLING. I can't believe it. Look at the mess on that desk. Shameful!

ABE. Give me another year of law practice and I'll need a warehouse for the overflow. . . . But—sit yourself down, Bowling, and tell me what brings you to Springfield.

[BOWLING sits. JOSH has sat on the couch, smoking his pipe. BILLY is again at the table.]

BOWLING. I've been up to Lake Michigan—fishing—came in today on the steam-cars—scared me out of a year's growth. But how are you doing, Abe? Josh says you're still broke, but you're a great social success.

ABE. True—on both counts. I'm greatly in demand at all the more elegant functions. You remember Ninian Edwards?

BOWLING. Of course.

ABE. Well, sir—I'm a guest at his mansion regularly. He's got a house so big you could race horses in the parlor. And his wife is one of the Todd family from Kentucky. Very high-grade people. They spell their name with two D's—which is pretty impressive when you consider that one was enough for God.

JOSH. Tell Bowling whom you met over in Rochester.

ABE. The President of the United States!

BOWLING. You don't tell me so!

ABE. Do you see that hand? (*He holds out his right hand, palm upward.*)

BOWLING. Yes—I see it.

ABE. It has shaken the hand of Martin Van Buren!

BOWLING (*laughing*). Was the President properly respectful to you, Abe?

ABE. Indeed he was! He said to me, "We've been hearing great things of you in Washington." I found out later he'd said the same thing to every other

cross-roads politician he'd met. (*He laughs.*) But Billy Herndon there is pretty disgusted with me for associating with the wrong kind of people. Billy's a firebrand—a real, radical abolitionist—and he can't stand anybody who keeps his mouth shut and abides by the Constitution. If he had his way, the whole Union would be set on fire and we'd all be burned to a crisp. Eh, Billy?

BILLY (*grimly*). Yes, Mr. Lincoln. And if you'll permit me to say so, I think you'd be of more use to your fellow-men if you allowed some of the same incendiary impulses to come out in you.

ABE. You see, Bowling? He wants me to get down into the blood-soaked arena and grapple with all the lions of injustice and oppression.

BOWLING. Mr. Herndon—my profound compliments.

BILLY (*rising and taking his hat*). Thank you, sir. (*He shakes hands with BOWLING, then turns to ABE:*) I have the writ prepared in the Willcox case. I'll take it down to the Clerk of Court to be attested.

ABE. All right, Billy.

BILLY (*to BOWLING*). Squire Green—Mr. Lincoln regards you and Mr. Speed as the best friends he has on earth, and I should like to beg you, in his presence, for God's sake drag him out of this stagnant pool in which he's rapidly drowning himself. Good day, sir—good day, Mr. Speed.

JOSH. Good day, Billy.

[BILLY has gone.]

BOWLING. That's a bright young man, Abe. Seems to have a good grasp of things.

ABE (*looking after BILLY*). He's going downstairs to the Clerk's office, but he took his hat. Which means that before he comes back to work, he'll have paid a little visit to the Chenery House saloon.

BOWLING. Does the boy drink?

ABE. Yes. He's got great fires in him, but he's putting 'em out fast. . . . Now—tell me about New Salem. (*He leans against the wall near the window.*)

BOWLING. Practically nothing of it left.

ABE. How's that blessed wife of yours?

BOWLING. Nancy's busier than ever, and more than ever concerned about your innermost thoughts and yearnings. In fact, she instructed me expressly to ask what on earth is the matter with you?

ABE (*laughs*). You can tell her there's nothing the matter. I've been able to pay off my debts to the extent of some seven cents on the dollar, and I'm sound of skin and skeleton.

BOWLING. But why don't we hear more from you and of you?

ABE. Josh can tell you. I've been busy.

BOWLING. What at?

ABE. I'm a candidate.

JOSH (*pointing to the poster*). Haven't you noticed his name? It's here—at the bottom of the list of Electors on the Whig ticket.

ABE. Yes, sir—if old Tippecanoe wins next fall, I'll be a member of the Electoral College.

BOWLING. The Electoral College! And is that the best you can do?

ABE. Yes—in the limited time at my disposal. I had a letter from Seth Gale—remember—he used to live in New Salem and was always aiming to move West. He's settled down in Maryland now and has a wife and a son. He says that back East they're powerful worried about the annexation of Texas.

BOWLING. They have reason to be. It would probably mean extending slavery through all the territories, from Kansas and Nebraska right out to Oregon and California. That would give the South absolute rule of the country—and God help the rest of us in the free states.

JOSH. It's an ugly situation, all right. It's got the seeds in it of nothing more nor less than civil war.

ABE. Well, if so, it'll be the abolitionists' own fault. They know where this trouble might lead, and yet they go right on agitating. They ought to be locked up for disturbing the peace, all of them.

BOWLING. I thought you were opposed to slavery, Abe? Have you changed your mind about it?

ABE (*ambles over to the couch and sprawls on it*). No. I am opposed to slavery. But I'm even more opposed to going to war. And, on top of that, I know what you're getting at, both of you. (*He speaks to them with the utmost good nature.*) You're following Billy Herndon's lead—troubling your kind hearts with concerns about me and when am I going to amount to something. Is that it?

BOWLING. Oh, no, Abe. Far be it from me to interfere in your life.

JOSH. Or me, either. If we happen to feel that, so far, you've been a big disappointment to us, we'll surely keep it to ourselves.

ABE (*laughs*). I'm afraid you'll have to do what I've had to do—which is, learn to accept me for what I am. I'm no fighting man. I found that out when I went through the Black Hawk War, and was terrified that I might have to fire a shot at an Indian. Fortunately, the Indians felt the same way, so I never saw one of them. Now, I know plenty of men who like to fight; they're willing to kill, and not scared of being killed. All right. Let them attend to the battles that have to be fought.

BOWLING. Peaceable men have sometimes been of service to their country.

ABE. They may have been peaceable when they started, but they didn't remain so long after they'd become mixed in the great brawl of politics. (*He sits up.*) Suppose I ran for Congress, and got elected. I'd be right in the thick of that ugly situation you were speaking of. One day I might have to cast my vote on the terrible issue of war or peace. It might be war with Mexico over Texas; or war with England over Oregon; or even war with our own people across the Ohio River. What attitude would I take in deciding which way to vote? "The Liberal attitude," of course. And what is the Liberal attitude? To go to war, for a tract of land, or a moral principle? Or to avoid war at all costs? No, sir. The place for me is in the Electoral College, where all I have to do is vote for the President whom everybody else elected four months previous.

BOWLING. Well, Abe—you were always an artful dodger—and maybe you'll

be able to go on to the end of your days avoiding the clutch of your own conscience.

[NINIAN EDWARDS *comes in. He is a little stouter and more prosperous.*]

ABE-JOSH. Hello, Ninian.

NINIAN. Hello. I saw Billy Herndon at the Chenery House and he said you were back from the circuit. (*He sees BOWLING.*) Why—it's my good friend Squire Green. How de do, and welcome to Springfield. (*He shakes hands with BOWLING.*)

BOWLING. Thank you, Mr. Edwards.

NINIAN. I just called in, Abe, to tell you you must dine with us. And, Squire, Mrs. Edwards would be honored to receive you, if your engagements will permit—and you, too, Josh.

JOSH. Delighted!

NINIAN. We're proudly exhibiting my sister-in-law, Miss Mary Todd, who has just come from Kentucky to grace our home. She's a very gay young lady—speaks French like a native, recites poetry at the drop of a hat, and knows the names and habits of all the flowers. I've asked Steve Douglas and some of the other eligibles to meet her, so you boys had better get in early.

BOWLING. My compliments to Mrs. Edwards, but my own poor wife awaits me impatiently, I hope.

NINIAN. I appreciate your motives, Squire, and applaud them. You'll be along presently, Abe?

ABE. I wouldn't be surprised.

NINIAN. Good. You'll meet a delightful young lady. And I'd better warn you she's going to survey the whole field of matrimonial prospects and select the one who promises the most. So you'd better be on your guard, Abe, unless you're prepared to lose your standing as a free man.

ABE. I thank you for the warning, Ninian.

NINIAN. Good day to you, Squire. See you later, Josh. (*He goes out.*)

ABE. There, Bowling—you see how things are with me. Hardly a day goes by but what I'm invited to meet some eager young female who has all the graces, including an ability to speak the language of diplomacy.

BOWLING. I'm sorry, Abe, that I shan't be able to hear you carrying on a flirtation in French.

[ABE *looks at him, curiously.*]

ABE. I'm not pretending with you, Bowling—or you, Josh. I couldn't fool you any better than I can fool myself. I know what you're thinking about me, and I think so, too. Only I'm not so merciful in considering my own shortcomings, or so ready to forgive them, as you are. But—you talk about civil war—there seems to be one going on inside me all the time. Both sides are right and both are wrong and equal in strength. I'd like to be able to rise superior to the struggle—but—it says in the Bible that a house divided against itself cannot stand, so I reckon there's not much hope. One of these days, I'll just split asunder, and part company with myself—and it'll be a good riddance from both points of view. However—come on. (*He takes his hat.*) You've

got to get back to Nancy, and Josh and I have got to make a good impression upon Miss Mary Todd, of Kentucky. (*He waves them to the door. As they go out, the light fades.*)

END OF SCENE IV

ACT TWO—SCENE V

PARLOR of the Edwards house in Springfield. An evening in November, some six months after the preceding scene.

There is a fireplace at the right, a heavily curtained bay window at the left, a door at the back leading into the front hall.

At the right, by the fireplace, are a small couch and an easy chair. There is another couch at the left, and a table and chairs at the back. There are family portraits on the walls. It is all moderately elegant.

NINIAN is standing before the fire, in conversation with ELIZABETH, his wife. She is high-bred, ladylike—excessively so. She is, at the moment, in a state of some agitation.

ELIZABETH. I cannot believe it! It is an outrageous reflection on my sister's good sense.

NINIAN. I'm not so sure of that. Mary has known Abe for several months, and she has had plenty of chance to observe him closely.

ELIZABETH. She has been entertained by him, as we all have. But she has been far more attentive to Edwin Webb and Stephen Douglas and many others who are distinctly eligible.

NINIAN. Isn't it remotely possible that she sees more in Abe than you do?

ELIZABETH. Nonsense! Mr. Lincoln's chief virtue is that he hides no part of his simple soul from anyone. He's a most amiable creature, to be sure; but as the husband of a high-bred, high-spirited young lady . . .

NINIAN. Quite so, Elizabeth. Mary is high-spirited! That is just why she set her cap for him.

[ELIZABETH looks at him sharply, then laughs.]

ELIZABETH. You're making fun of me, Ninian. You're deliberately provoking me into becoming excited about nothing.

NINIAN. No, Elizabeth—I am merely trying to prepare you for a rude shock. You think Abe Lincoln would be overjoyed to capture an elegant, cultivated girl, daughter of the President of the Bank of Kentucky, descendant of a long line of English gentlemen. Well, you are mistaken . . .

[MARY TODD comes in. She is twenty-two—short, pretty, remarkably sharp. She stops short in the doorway, and her suspecting eyes dart from ELIZABETH to NINIAN.]

MARY. What were you two talking about?

NINIAN. I was telling your sister about the new song the boys are singing:

“What is the great commotion, motion,

Our country through?

It is the ball a-rolling on

For Tippecanoe and Tyler, too—for Tippecanoe . . ."

MARY (*with a rather grim smile*). I compliment you for thinking quickly, Ninian. But you were talking about *me*! (*She looks at ELIZABETH, who quails a little before her sister's determination.*) Weren't you?

ELIZABETH. Yes, Mary, we were.

MARY. And quite seriously, I gather.

NINIAN. I'm afraid that our dear Elizabeth has become unduly alarmed . . .

ELIZABETH (*snapping at him*). Let me say what I have to say! (*She turns to MARY.*) Mary—you must tell me the truth. Are you—have you ever given one moment's serious thought to the possibility of marriage with Abraham Lincoln? (*MARY looks at each of them, her eyes flashing.*) I promise you, Mary, that to me such a notion is too far beyond the bounds of credibility to be . . .

MARY. But Ninian has raised the horrid subject, hasn't he? He has brought the evil scandal out into the open, and we must face it, fearlessly. Let us do so at once, by all means. I shall answer you, Elizabeth: I have given more than one moment's thought to the possibility you mentioned—and I have decided that I shall be Mrs. Lincoln. (*She seats herself on the couch.*) (*NINIAN is about to say, "I told you so," but thinks better of it. ELIZABETH can only gasp and gape.*) I have examined, carefully, the qualifications of all the young gentlemen, and some of the old ones, in this neighborhood. Those of Mr. Lincoln seem to me superior to all others, and he is my choice.

ELIZABETH. Do you expect me to congratulate you upon this amazing selection?

MARY. No! I ask for no congratulations, nor condolences, either.

ELIZABETH (*turning away*). Then I shall offer none.

NINIAN. Forgive me for prying, Mary—but have you as yet communicated your decision to the gentleman himself?

MARY (*with a slight smile at NINIAN*). Not yet. But he is coming to call this evening, and he will ask humbly for my hand in marriage; and, after I have displayed the proper amount of surprise and confusion, I shall murmur, timidly, "Yes!"

ELIZABETH (*pitiful*). You make a brave jest of it, Mary. But as for me, I am deeply and painfully shocked. I don't know what to say to you. But I urge you, I beg you, as your elder sister, responsible to our father and our dead mother for your welfare . . .

MARY (*with a certain tenderness*). I can assure you, Elizabeth—it is useless to beg or command. I have made up my mind.

NINIAN. I admire your courage, Mary, but I should like . . .

ELIZABETH. I think, Ninian, that this is a matter for discussion solely between my sister and myself!

MARY. No! I want to hear what Ninian has to say. (*To NINIAN.*) What is it?

NINIAN. I only wondered if I might ask you another question.

MARY (*calmly*). You may.

NINIAN. Understand, my dear—I'm not quarreling with you. My affection for Abe is eternal—but—I'm curious to know—what is it about him that makes you choose him for a husband?

MARY (*betraying her first sign of uncertainty*). I should like to give you a plain, simple answer, Ninian. But I cannot.

ELIZABETH (*jumping at this*). Of course you cannot! You're rushing blindly into this. You have no conception of what it will mean to your future.

MARY. You're wrong about that, Elizabeth. This is not the result of wild, tempestuous infatuation. I have not been swept off my feet. Mr. Lincoln is a Westerner, but that is his only point of resemblance to Young Lochinvar. I simply feel that of all the men I've ever known, he is the one whose life and destiny I want most to share.

ELIZABETH. Haven't you sense enough to know you could never be happy with him? His breeding—his background—his manner—his whole point of view . . . ?

MARY (*gravely*). I could not be content with a "happy" marriage in the accepted sense of the word. I have no craving for comfort and security.

ELIZABETH. And have you a craving for the kind of life you would lead? A miserable cabin, without a servant, without a stitch of clothing that is fit for exhibition in decent society?

MARY (*raising her voice*). I have not yet tried poverty, so I cannot say how I should take to it. But I might well prefer it to anything I have previously known—so long as there is forever before me the chance for high adventure—so long as I can know that I am always going forward, with my husband, along a road that leads across the horizon. (*This last is said with a sort of mad intensity.*)

ELIZABETH. And how far do you think you will go with anyone like Abe Lincoln, who is lazy and shiftless and prefers to stop constantly along the way to tell jokes?

MARY (*rising; furious*). He will *not* stop, if I am strong enough to make him go on! And I am strong! I know what *you* expect of me. You want me to do precisely as you have done—and marry a man like Ninian—and I know many, that are *just* like him! But with all due respect to my dear brother-in-law—I don't want that—and I won't have it! Never! You live in a house with a fence around it—presumably to prevent the common herd from gaining access to your sacred precincts—but really to prevent you, yourselves, from escaping from your own narrow lives. In Abraham Lincoln I see a man who has split rails for other men's fences, but who will never build one around himself!

ELIZABETH. What are you *saying*, Mary? You are talking with a degree of irresponsibility that is not far from sheer madness . . .

MARY (*scornfully*). I imagine it does seem like insanity to you! You married a man who was settled and established in the world, with a comfortable inheritance, and no problems to face. And you've never made a move to change your condition, or improve it. You consider it couldn't be improved.

To you, all this represents perfection. But it doesn't to me! I want the chance to *shape* a new life, for myself, and for my husband. Is that irresponsibility?

[*A MAID appears.*]

MAID. Mr. Lincoln, ma'am.

ELIZABETH. He's here.

MARY (*firmly*). I shall see him!

MAID. Will you step in, Mr. Lincoln?

[*ABE comes in, wearing a new suit, his hair nearly neat.*]

ABE. Good evening, Mrs. Edwards. Good evening, Miss Todd. Ninian, good evening.

ELIZABETH. Good evening.

MARY. Good evening, Mr. Lincoln. [*She sits on the couch at the left.*]

NINIAN. Glad to see you, Abe.

[*ABE sees that there is electricity in the atmosphere of this parlor. He tries hard to be affably casual.*]

ABE. I'm afraid I'm a little late in arriving, but I ran into an old friend of mine, wife of Jack Armstrong, the champion rowdy of New Salem. I believe you have some recollection of him, Ninian.

NINIAN (*smiling*). I most certainly have. What's he been up to now?

ABE (*stands in front of the fireplace*). Oh, he's all right, but Hannah, his wife, is in fearful trouble because her son Duff is up for murder and she wants me to defend him. I went over to the jail to interview the boy and he looks pretty tolerably guilty to me. But I used to give him lessons in the game of marbles while his mother foxed my pants for me. (*He turns to ELIZABETH.*) That means, she sewed buckskin around the legs of my pants so I wouldn't tear 'em to shreds going through underbrush when I was surveying. Well—in view of old times, I felt I had to take the case and do what I can to obstruct the orderly processes of justice.

NINIAN (*laughs, with some relief*). And the boy will be acquitted. I tell you, Abe—this country would be law-abiding and peaceful if it weren't for you lawyers. But—if you will excuse Elizabeth and me, we must hear the children's prayers and see them safely abed.

ABE. Why—I'd be glad to hear their prayers, too.

NINIAN. Oh, no! You'd only keep them up till all hours with your stories. Come along, Elizabeth.

[*ELIZABETH doesn't want to go, but doesn't know what to do to prevent it.*]

ABE (*to ELIZABETH*). Kiss them good night for me.

NINIAN. We'd better not tell them you're in the house, or they'll be furious.

ELIZABETH (*making one last attempt*). Mary! Won't you come with us and say good night to the children?

NINIAN. No, my dear. Leave Mary here—to keep Abe entertained. (*He guides ELIZABETH out, following her.*)

MARY (*with a little laugh*). I don't blame Ninian for keeping you away from those children. They all adore you.

ABE. Well—I always seemed to get along well with children. Probably it's because they never want to take me seriously.

MARY. You understand them—that's the important thing . . . But—do sit down, Mr. Lincoln. (*She indicates that he is to sit next to her.*)

ABE. Thank you—I will. (*He starts to cross to the couch to sit beside MARY. She looks at him with melting eyes. The lights fade.*)

END OF SCENE V

ACT TWO—SCENE VI

AGAIN *the Law Office. It is afternoon of New Year's Day, a few weeks after the preceding scene.*

ABE *is sitting, slumped in his chair, staring at his desk. He has his hat and overcoat on. A muffler is hanging about his neck, untied.*

JOSH SPEED *is half-sitting on the table at the right. He is reading a long letter, with most serious attention. At length he finishes it, refolds it very carefully, stares at the floor.*

ABE. Have you finished it, Josh?

JOSH. Yes.

ABE. Well—do you think it's all right?

JOSH. No, Abe—I don't. (*ABE turns slowly and looks at him.*) I think the sending of this letter would be a most grave mistake—and that is putting it mildly and charitably.

ABE. Have I stated the case too crudely? (*ABE is evidently in a serious state of distress, although he is making a tremendous effort to disguise it by speaking in what he intends to be a coldly impersonal tone. He is struggling mightily to hold himself back from the brink of nervous collapse.*)

JOSH. No—I have no quarrel with your choice of words. None whatever. If anything, the phraseology is too correct. But—your method of doing it, Abe! It's brutal, it's heartless, it's so unworthy of you that I—I'm at a loss to understand how you ever thought you could do it this way.

ABE. I've done the same thing before with a woman to whom I seemed to have become attached. She approved of my action.

JOSH. This is a different woman. (*He walks over to the window, then turns again toward ABE.*) You cannot seem to accept the fact that women are human beings, too, as variable as we are. You act on the assumption that they're all the same one—and that one is a completely unearthly being of your own conception. This letter isn't written to Mary Todd—it's written to yourself. Every line of it is intended to provide salve for your own conscience.

ABE (*rising; coldly*). Do I understand that you will not deliver it for me?

JOSH. No, Abe—I shall not.

ABE (*angrily*). Then someone else will!

JOSH (*scornfully*). Yes. You could give it to the minister, to hand to the bride when he arrives for the ceremony. But—I hope, Abe, you won't send it till you're feeling a little calmer in your mind. . . .

ABE (*vehemently, turning to* JOSH). How can I ever be calm in my mind until this thing is settled, and out of the way, once and for all? Have you got eyes in your head, Josh? Can't you see that I'm desperate?

JOSH. I can see that plainly, Abe. I think your situation is more desperate even than you imagine, and I believe you should have the benefit of some really intelligent medical advice.

ABE (*seating himself at* BILLY's table). The trouble with me isn't anything that a doctor can cure.

JOSH. There's a good man named Dr. Drake, who makes a specialty of treating people who get into a state of mind like yours, Abe . . .

ABE (*utterly miserable*). So that's how you've figured it! I've done what I've threatened to do many times before: I've gone crazy. Well—you know me better than most men, Josh—and perhaps you're not far off right. I just feel that I've got to the end of my rope, and I must let go, and drop—and where I'll land, I don't know, and whether I'll survive the fall, I don't know that either. . . . But—this I *do* know: I've got to get out of this thing—I can't go through with it—I've got to have my release!

[JOSH *has turned to the window. Suddenly he turns back, toward* ABE.]

JOSH. Ninian Edwards is coming up. Why not show this letter to him and ask for his opinion. . . .

ABE (*interrupting, with desperation*). No, no! Don't say a word of any of this to him! Put that letter in your pocket. I can't bear to discuss this business with him, now.

[JOSH *puts the letter in his pocket and crosses to the couch.*]

JOSH. Hello, Ninian.

NINIAN (*heartily, from off*). Hello, Josh! Happy New Year! (NINIAN *comes in. He wears a handsome, fur-trimmed great-coat, and carries two silver-headed canes, one of them in a baize bag, which he lays down on the table at the right.*)

NINIAN. And Happy New Year, Abe—in fact, the happiest of your whole life!

ABE. Thank you, Ninian. And Happy New Year to you.

NINIAN (*opening his coat*). That didn't sound much as if you meant it. (*He goes to the stove to warm his hands.*) However, you can be forgiven today, Abe. I suppose you're inclined to be just a wee bit nervous. (*He chuckles and winks at* JOSH.) God—but it's cold in here! Don't you ever light this stove?

ABE. The fire's all laid. Go ahead and light it, if you want.

NINIAN (*striking a match*). You certainly are in one of your less amiable moods today. (*He lights the stove.*)

JOSH. Abe's been feeling a little under the weather.

NINIAN. So it seems. He looks to me as if he'd been to a funeral.

ABE. That's where I have been.

NINIAN (*disbelieving*). What? A funeral on your wedding day?

JOSH. They buried Abe's oldest friend, Bowling Green, this morning.

NINIAN (*shocked*). Oh—I'm mighty sorry to hear that, Abe. And—I hope you'll forgive me for—not having known about it.

ABE. Of course, Ninian.

NINIAN. But I'm glad you were there, Abe, at the funeral. It must have been a great comfort to his family.

ABE. I wasn't any comfort to anyone. They asked me to deliver an oration, a eulogy of the deceased—and I tried—and I couldn't say a thing. Why do they expect you to strew a lot of flowery phrases over anything so horrible as a dead body? Do they think that Bowling Green's soul needs quotations to give it peace? All that mattered to me was that he was a good, just man—and I loved him—and he's dead.

NINIAN. Why didn't you say that, Abe?

ABE (*rising*). I told you—they wanted an oration.

NINIAN. Well, Abe—I think Bowling Green himself would be the first to ask you to put your sadness aside in the prospect of your own happiness, and Mary's—and I'm only sorry that our old friend didn't live to see you two fine people married. (*He is making a gallant attempt to assume a more cheerily nuptial tone.*) I've made all the arrangements with the Reverend Dresser, and Elizabeth is preparing a bang-up dinner—so you can be sure the whole affair will be carried off handsomely *and* painlessly. (BILLY HERNDON *comes in. He carries a bottle in his coat pocket, and is already more than a little drunk and sullen, but abnormally articulate.*) Ah, Billy—Happy New Year!

BILLY. The same to you, Mr. Edwards. (*He puts the bottle down on the table and takes his coat off.*)

NINIAN. I brought you a wedding present, Abe. Thought you'd like to make a brave show when you first walk out with your bride. It came from the same place in Louisville where I bought mine. (*He picks up one of the canes and hands it proudly to ABE, who takes it and inspects it gravely.*)

ABE. It's very fine, Ninian. And I thank you. (*He takes the cane over to his desk and seats himself.*)

NINIAN. Well—I'll frankly confess that in getting it for you, I was influenced somewhat by consideration for Mary and her desire for keeping up appearances. And in that connection—I know you'll forgive me, Josh, and you, too, Billy, if I say something of a somewhat personal nature?

BILLY (*truculent*). If you want me to leave you, I shall be glad to. . . .

NINIAN. No, please, Billy—I merely want to speak a word or two as another of Abe's friends; it's my last chance before the ceremony. Of course, the fact that the bride is my sister-in-law gives me a little added responsibility in wishing to promote the success of this marriage. (*He crosses to ABE.*) And a success it will be, Abe . . . if only you will bear in mind one thing: you must keep a tight rein on her ambition. My wife tells me that even as a child, she had delusions of grandeur—she predicted to one and all that the man she would marry would be President of the United States. (*He turns to JOSH.*) You know how it is—every boy in the country plans some day to be president, and every little girl plans to marry him. (*Again to ABE:*) But Mary is one who hasn't entirely lost those youthful delusions. So I urge you to beware. Don't let her talk you into any gallant crusades or wild goose chases.

Let her learn to be satisfied with the estate to which God hath brought her. With which, I shall conclude my pre-nuptial sermon. (*He buttons his coat.*) I shall see you all at the house at five o'clock, and I want you to make sure that Abe is looking his prettiest.

JOSH. Good-bye, Ninian.

[NINIAN goes out. ABE turns again to the desk and stares at nothing. BILLY takes the bottle and a cup from his desk and pours himself a stiff drink. He raises the cup toward ABE.]

BILLY (*huskily*). Mr. Lincoln, I beg leave to drink to your health and happiness . . . and to that of the lady who will become your wife. (ABE makes no response. BILLY drinks it down, then puts the cup back on the table.) You don't want to accept my toast because you think it wasn't sincere. And I'll admit I've made it plain that I've regretted the step you've taken. I thought that in this marriage, you were lowering yourself—you were trading your honor for some exalted family connections. . . . I wish to apologize for so thinking. . . .

ABE. No apologies required, Billy.

BILLY. I doubt that Miss Todd and I will ever get along well together. But I'm now convinced that our aims are the same—particularly since I've heard the warnings delivered by her brother-in-law. (*A note of scorn colors his allusion to NINIAN.*) If she really is ambitious for you—if she will never stop driving you, goading you—then I say, God bless her, and give her strength! [*He has said all this with ABE's back to him. BILLY pours himself another drink, nearly emptying the large bottle. ABE turns and looks at him.*]

ABE. Have you had all of that bottle today?

BILLY. This bottle? Yes—I have.

JOSH. And why not? It's New Year's Day!

BILLY (*looking at JOSH*). Thank you, Mr. Speed. Thank you for the defense. And I hope you will permit me to propose one more toast. (*He takes a step toward ABE.*) To the President of the United States, and Mrs. Lincoln! (*He drinks.*)

ABE (*grimly*). I think we can do without any more toasts, Billy.

BILLY. Very well! That's the last one—until after the wedding. And then, no doubt, the Edwards will serve us with the costliest champagne. And, in case you're apprehensive, I shall be on my best behavior in that distinguished gathering!

ABE. There is not going to be a wedding. (BILLY stares at him, and then looks at JOSH, and then again at ABE.) I have a letter that I want you to deliver to Miss Todd.

BILLY. What letter? What is it?

ABE. Give it to him, Josh. (JOSH takes the letter out of his pocket, and puts it in the stove. ABE jumps up.) You have no right to do that!

JOSH. I know I haven't! But it's done. (ABE is staring at JOSH.) And don't look at me as if you were planning to break my neck. Of course you could do it, Abe—but you won't. (JOSH turns to BILLY.) In that letter, Mr. Lincoln asked Miss Todd for his release. He told her that he had made a mistake in his previous protestations of affection for her, and so he couldn't go through

with a marriage which could only lead to endless pain and misery for them both.

ABE (*deeply distressed*). If that isn't the truth, what is?

JOSH. I'm not disputing the truth of it. I'm only asking you to tell her so, to her face, in the manner of a man.

ABE. It would be a more cruel way. It would hurt her more deeply. For I couldn't help blurting it *all* out—all the terrible things I didn't say in that letter. (*He is speaking with passion.*) I'd have to tell that I have hatred for her infernal ambition—that I don't want to be ridden and driven, upward and onward through life, with her whip lashing me, and her spurs digging into me! If her poor soul craves importance in life, then let her marry Stephen Douglas. He's ambitious, too. . . . I want only to be left alone! (*He sits down again and leans on the table.*)

JOSH (*bitterly*). Very well, then—tell her all that! It will be more gracious to admit that you're afraid of her, instead of letting her down flat with the statement that your ardor, such as it was, has cooled.

[BILLY *has been seething with a desire to get into this conversation. Now, with a momentary silence, he plunges.*]

BILLY. May I say something?

ABE. I doubt that you're in much of a condition to contribute. . . .

JOSH. What is it, Billy?

BILLY (*hotly*). It's just this. Mr. Lincoln, you're not abandoning Miss Mary Todd. No! You're only using her as a living sacrifice, offering her up, in the hope that you will thus gain forgiveness of the gods for your failure to do your own great duty!

ABE (*smoldering*). Yes! My own great duty. Everyone feels called upon to remind me of it, but no one can tell me what it is.

BILLY (*almost tearful*). I can tell you! I can tell you what is the duty of every man who calls himself an American! It is to perpetuate those truths which were once held to be self-evident: that all men are created equal—that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights—that among these are the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

ABE (*angrily*). And are those rights denied to *me*?

BILLY. Could you ever enjoy them while your mind is full of the awful knowledge that two million of your fellow beings in this country are slaves? Can you take any satisfaction from looking at that flag above your desk, when you know that ten of its stars represent states which are willing to destroy the Union—rather than yield their property rights in the flesh and blood of those slaves? And what of all the States of the future? All the territories of the West—clear out to the Pacific Ocean? Will they be the homes of free men? Are you answering *that* question to your own satisfaction? That is your flag, Mr. Lincoln, and you're proud of it. But what are you doing to save it from being ripped into shreds?

[ABE *jumps to his feet, towers over BILLY, and speaks with temper restrained, but with great passion.*]

ABE. I'm minding my own business—that's what I'm doing! And there'd be no threat to the Union if others would do the same. And as to slavery—I'm sick and tired of this righteous talk about it. When you know more about law, you'll know that those property rights you mentioned are guaranteed by the Constitution. And if the Union can't stand on the Constitution, then let it fall!

BILLY. The hell with the Constitution! This is a matter of the rights of living men to freedom—and those came before the Constitution! When the Law denies those rights, then the Law is wrong, and it must be changed, if not by moral protest, then by force! There's no course of action that isn't justified in the defense of freedom! And don't dare to tell me that anyone in the world knows that better than you do, Mr. Lincoln. You, who honor the memory of Elijah Lovejoy and every other man who ever died for that very ideal!

ABE (*turning away from him*). Yes—I honor them—and envy them—because they could believe that their ideals are *worth* dying for. (*He turns to JOSH and speaks with infinite weariness.*) All right, Josh—I'll go up now and talk to Mary—and then I'm going away. . . .

JOSH. Where, Abe?

ABE (*dully*). I don't know.

[*He goes out and closes the door after him. After a moment, BILLY rushes to the door, opens it, and shouts after ABE.*]

BILLY. You're quitting, Mr. Lincoln! As surely as there's a God in Heaven, He knows that you're running away from your obligations to Him, and to your fellow-men, and your own immortal soul!

JOSH (*drawing BILLY away from the door*). Billy—Billy—leave him alone. He's a sick man.

BILLY (*sitting down at the table*). What can we do for him, Mr. Speed? What can we do? (*BILLY is now actually in tears.*)

JOSH. I don't know, Billy. (*He goes to the window and looks out.*) He'll be in such a state of emotional upheaval, he'll want to go away by himself, for a long time. Just as he did after the death of poor little Ann Rutledge. He'll go out and wander on the prairies, trying to grope his way back into the wilderness from which he came. There's nothing we can do for him, Billy. He'll have to do it for himself.

BILLY (*fervently*). May God be with him!

END OF SCENE VI

ACT TWO—SCENE VII

ON THE PRAIRIE, near New Salem. It is a clear, cool, moonlit evening, nearly two years after the preceding scene.

In the foreground is a campfire. Around it are packing cases, blanket rolls and one ancient trunk. In the background is a covered wagon, standing at an angle, so that the opening at the back of it is visible to the audience.

SETH GALE *is standing by the fire, holding his seven-year-old son, JIMMY, in his arms. The boy is wrapped up in a blanket.*

JIMMY. I don't want to be near the fire, Paw. I'm burning up. Won't you take the blanket offen me, Paw?

SETH. No, son. You're better off if you keep yourself covered.

JIMMY. I want some water, Paw. Can't I have some water?

SETH. Yes! Keep quiet, Jimmy! Gobey's getting the water for you now. (*He looks off to the right, and sees JACK ARMSTRONG coming.*) Hello, Jack, I was afraid you'd got lost.

JACK (*coming in*). I couldn't get lost anywheres around New Salem. How's the boy?

SETH (*with a cautionary look at JACK*). He—he's a little bit thirsty. Did you find Abe?

JACK. Yes—it took me some time because he'd wandered off—went out to the old cemetery across the river to visit Ann Rutledge's grave.

SETH. Is he coming here?

JACK. He said he'd better go get Doc Chandler who lives on the Winchester Road. He'll be along in a while. (*He comes up to JIMMY.*) How you feelin', Jimmy?

JIMMY. I'm burning . . .

[AGGIE appears, sees JACK.]

AGGIE. Oh—I'm glad you're back, Mr. Armstrong.

JACK. There'll be a doctor here soon, Mrs. Gale.

AGGIE. Thank God for that! Bring him into the wagon, Seth. I got a nice, soft bed all ready for him.

SETH. You hear that, Jimmy? Your ma's fixed a place where you can rest comfortable.

[AGGIE retreats into the wagon.]

JIMMY. When'll Gobey come back? I'm thirsty. When'll he bring the water?

SETH. Right away, son. You can trust Gobey to get your water. (*He hands JIMMY into the wagon.*)

JACK. He's worse, ain't he?

SETH (*in a despairing tone*). Yes. The fever's been raging something fierce since you left. It'll sure be a relief when Abe gets here. He can always do something to put confidence in you.

JACK. How long since you've seen Abe, Seth?

SETH. Haven't laid eyes on him since I left here—eight—nine years ago. We've corresponded some.

JACK. Well—you may be surprised when you see him. He's changed plenty since he went to Springfield. He climbed up pretty high in the world, but he appears to have slipped down lately. He ain't much like his old comical self.

SETH. Well, I guess we all got to change. (*He starts up, hearing GOBEY return.*) Aggie! (*GOBEY, a Negro, comes in from the left, carrying a bucket of water. AGGIE appears from the wagon.*) Here's Gobey with the water.

GOBEY. Yes, Miss Aggie. Here you are. (*He hands it up.*)

AGGIE. Thanks, Gobey. (*She goes back into the wagon.*)

GOBEY. How's Jimmy now, Mr. Seth?

SETH. About the same.

GOBEY (*shaking his head*). I'll get some more water for the cooking. (*He picks up a kettle and a pot and goes.*)

SETH (*to JACK*). It was a bad thing to have happen, all right—the boy getting sick—when we were on an expedition like this. No doctor—no way of caring for him.

JACK. How long you been on the road, Seth?

SETH. More than three months. Had a terrible time in the Pennsylvania Mountains, fearful rains and every stream flooded. I can tell you, there was more than one occasion when I wanted to turn back and give up the whole idea. But—when you get started—you just can't turn . . . (*He is looking off right.*) Say! Is that Abe coming now?

JACK (*rising*). Yep. That's him.

SETH (*delighted*). My God, look at him! Store clothes and a plug hat! Hello—Abe!

ABE. Hello, Seth. (*He comes on and shakes hands, warmly.*) I'm awful glad to see you again, Seth.

SETH. And me, too, Abe.

ABE. It did my heart good when I heard you were on your way West. Where's your boy?

SETH. He's in there—in the wagon. . . .

[*AGGIE has appeared from the wagon.*]

AGGIE. Is that the doctor?

SETH. No, Aggie—this is the man I was telling you about I wanted so much to see. This is Mr. Abe Lincoln—my wife, Mrs. Gale.

ABE. Pleased to meet you, Mrs. Gale.

AGGIE. Pleased to meet you, Mr. Lincoln.

ABE. Doc Chandler wasn't home. They said he was expected over at the Boger farm at midnight. I'll go there then and fetch him.

SETH. It'll be a friendly act, Abe.

AGGIE. We'll be in your debt, Mr. Lincoln.

ABE. In the meantime, Mrs. Gale, I'd like to do whatever I can. . . .

SETH. There's nothing to do, Abe. The boy's got the swamp fever, and we're just trying to keep him quiet.

AGGIE (*desperately*). There's just one thing I would wish—is—is there any kind of a preacher around this God-forsaken place?

SETH (*worried*). Preacher?

ABE. Do you know of any, Jack?

JACK. No. There ain't a preacher within twenty miles of New Salem now.

AGGIE. Well—I only thought if there was, we might get him here to say a prayer for Jimmy.

[*She goes back into the wagon. SETH looks after her with great alarm.*]

SETH. She wants a preacher. That looks as if she'd given up, don't it?

JACK. It'd probably just comfort her.

ABE. Is your boy very sick, Seth?

SETH. Yes—he is.

JACK. Why don't *you* speak a prayer, Abe? You could always think of somethin' to say.

ABE. I'm afraid I'm not much of a hand at praying. I couldn't think of a blessed thing that would be of any comfort.

SETH. Never mind. It's just a—a religious idea of Aggie's. Sit down, Abe.

ABE (*looking at the wagon*). So you've got your dream at last, Seth. You're doing what you and I used to talk about—you're moving.

SETH. Yes, Abe. We got crowded out of Maryland. The city grew up right over our farm. So—we're headed for a place where there's more room. I wrote you—about four months back—to tell you we were starting out, and I'd like to meet up with you here. I thought it was just possible you might consider joining in this trip.

ABE. It took a long time for your letter to catch up with me, Seth. I've just been drifting—down around Indiana and Kentucky where I used to live. (*He sits down on a box.*) Do you aim to settle in Nebraska?

SETH. No, we're not going to stop there. We're going right across the continent—all the way to Oregon.

ABE (*deeply impressed*). Oregon?

JACK. Sure. That's where they're all headin' for now.

SETH. We're making first for a place called Westport Landing—that's in Kansas right on the frontier—where they outfit the wagon trains for the far West. You join up there with a lot of others who are like-minded, so you've got company when you're crossing the plains and the mountains.

ABE. It's staggering—to think of the distance you're going. And you'll be taking the frontier along with you.

SETH. It may seem like a foolhardy thing to do—but we heard too many tales of the black earth out there, and the balance of rainfall and sunshine.

JACK. Why don't you go with them, Abe? That country out West is gettin' settled fast. Why—last week alone, I counted more than two hundred wagons went past here—people from all over—Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Vermont—all full of jubilation at the notion of gettin' land. By God, I'm goin' too, soon as I can get me a wagon. They'll need men like me to fight the Indians for 'em—and they'll need men with brains, like you, Abe, to tell 'em how to keep the peace.

ABE (*looking off*). It's a temptation to go, I can't deny that.

JACK. Then what's stoppin' you from doin' it? You said yourself you've just been driftin'.

ABE. Maybe that's it—maybe I've been drifting too long. . . . (*He changes the subject.*) Is it just the three of you, Seth?

SETH. That's all. The three of us and Gobey, the nigger.

ABE. Is he your slave?

SETH. Gobey? Hell, no! He's a free man! My father freed his father twenty years ago. But we've had to be mighty careful about Gobey. You see, where

we come from, folks are pretty uncertain how they feel about the slave question, and lots of good free niggers get snaked over the line into Virginia and then sold down river before you know it. And when you try to go to court and assert their legal rights, you're beaten at every turn by the damned, dirty shyster lawyers. That's why we've been keeping well up in free territory on this trip.

ABE. Do you think it will be free in Oregon?

SETH. Of course it will! It's got to—

ABE (*bitterly*). Oh, no, it hasn't, Seth. Not with the politicians in Washington selling out the whole West piece by piece to the slave traders.

SETH (*vehemently*). That territory has got to be free! If this country ain't strong enough to protect its citizens from slavery, then we'll cut loose from it and join with Canada. Or, better yet, we'll make a *new* country out there in the far West.

ABE (*gravely*). A new country?

SETH. Why not?

ABE. I was just thinking—old Mentor Graham once said to me that some day the United States might be divided up into many hostile countries, like Europe.

SETH. Well—let it be! Understand—I love this country and I'd fight for it. And I guess George Washington and the rest of them loved England and fought for it when they were young—but they didn't hesitate to cut loose when the government failed to play fair and square with 'em . . .

JACK. By God, if Andy Jackson was back in the White House, he'd run out them traitors with a horse-whip!

ABE. It'd be a bad day for us Americans, Seth, if we lost you, and your wife, and your son.

SETH (*breaking*). My son!—Oh—I've been talking big—but it's empty talk. If he dies—there won't be enough spirit left in us to push on any further. What's the use of working for a future when you know there won't be anybody growing up to enjoy it. Excuse me, Abe—but I'm feeling pretty scared.

ABE (*suddenly rises*). You mustn't be scared, Seth. I know I'm a poor one to be telling you that—because I've been scared all my life. But—seeing you now—and thinking of the big thing you've set out to do—well, it's made me feel pretty small. It's made me feel that I've got to do something, too, to keep you and your kind in the United States of America. You mustn't quit, Seth! Don't let anything beat you—don't you ever give up!

[AGGIE comes out of the wagon. She is very frightened.]

AGGIE. Seth!

SETH. What is it, Aggie?

AGGIE. He's worse, Seth! He's moaning in his sleep, and he's gasping for breath. . . .

[*She is crying. SETH takes her in his arms.*]

SETH. Never mind, honey. Never mind. When the doctor gets here, he'll fix him up in no time. It's all right, honey. He'll get well.

ABE. If you wish me to, Mrs. Gale—I'll try to speak a prayer.

[*They look at him.*]

JACK. That's the way to talk, Abe!

SETH. We'd be grateful for anything you might say, Abe.

[*ABE takes his hat off. As he starts speaking, GOBEY comes in from the left and stops reverently to listen.*]

ABE. O God, the father of all living, I ask you to look with gentle mercy upon this little boy who is here, lying sick in this covered wagon. His people are traveling far, to seek a new home in the wilderness, to do your work, God, to make this earth a good place for your children to live in. They can see clearly where they're going, and they're not afraid to face all the perils that lie along the way. I humbly beg you not to take their child from them. Grant him the freedom of life. Do not condemn him to the imprisonment of death. Do not deny him his birthright. Let him know the sight of great plains and high mountains, of green valleys and wide rivers. For this little boy is an American, and these things belong to him, and he to them. Spare him, that he too may strive for the ideal for which his fathers have labored, so faithfully and for so long. Spare him and give him his fathers' strength—give us all strength, O God, to do the work that is before us. I ask you this favor, in the name of *your* son, Jesus Christ, who died upon the Cross to set men free. Amen.

GOBEY (*with fervor*). Amen!

SETH AND AGGIE (*murmuring*). Amen!

[*ABE puts his hat on.*]

ABE. It's getting near midnight. I'll go over to the Boger farm and get the doctor. (*He goes out.*)

SETH. Thank you, Abe.

AGGIE. Thank you—thank you, Mr. Lincoln.

GOBEY. God bless you, Mr. Lincoln!

[*The lights fade quickly.*]

END OF SCENE VII

ACT TWO—SCENE VIII

AGAIN *the parlor of the Edwards house. A few days after preceding scene.*

MARY *is seated, reading a book.*

After a moment, the MAID enters.

MAID. Miss Mary—Mr. Lincoln is here.

MARY. Mr. Lincoln! (*She sits still a moment in an effort to control her emotions, then sharply closes the book and rises.*)

MAID. Will you see him, Miss Mary?

MARY. Yes—in one moment. (*The MAID goes off. MARY turns, drops her book on the sofa, then moves over toward the right, struggling desperately to com-*

pose herself. At the fireplace, she stops and turns to face ABE as he enters.) I'm glad to see you again, Mr. Lincoln.

[There is considerable constraint between them. He is grimly determined to come to the point with the fewest possible words; she is making a gallant, well-bred attempt to observe the social amenities.]

ABE. Thank you, Mary. You may well wonder why I have thrust myself on your mercy in this manner.

MARY (*quickly*). I'm sure you're always welcome in Ninian's house.

ABE. After my behavior at our last meeting here, I have not been welcome company for myself.

MARY. You've been through a severe illness. Joshua Speed has kept us informed of it. We've been greatly concerned.

ABE. It is most kind of you.

MARY. But you're restored to health now—you'll return to your work, and no doubt you'll be running for the assembly again—or perhaps you have larger plans?

ABE. I have no plans, Mary. (*He seems to brace himself.*) But I wish to tell you that I am sorry for the things that I said on that unhappy occasion which was to have been our wedding day.

MARY. You need not say anything about that, Mr. Lincoln. Whatever happened then, it was my own fault.

ABE (*disturbed by this unforeseen avowal*). Your fault! It was my miserable cowardice—

MARY. I was blinded by my own self-confidence! I—I loved you. (*For a moment her firm voice falters, but she immediately masters that tendency toward weakness.*) And I believed I could make you love me. I believed we might achieve a real communion of spirit, and the fire of my determination would burn in you. You would become a man and a leader of men! But you didn't wish that. (*She turns away.*) I knew you had strength—but I did not know you would use it, all of it, to resist your own magnificent destiny.

ABE (*deliberately*). It is true, Mary—you once had faith in me which I was far from deserving. But the time has come, at last, when I wish to strive to deserve it. (*MARY looks at him, sharply.*) When I behaved in that shameful manner toward you, I did so because I thought that our ways were separate and could never be otherwise. I've come to the conclusion that I was wrong. I believe that our destinies are together, for better or for worse, and I again presume to ask you to be my wife. I fully realize, Mary, that taking me back now would involve humiliation for you.

MARY (*flaring*). I am not afraid of humiliation, if I know it will be wiped out by ultimate triumph! But there can be no triumph unless you yourself are sure. What was it that brought you to this change of heart and mind?

ABE. On the prairie, I met an old friend of mine who was moving West, with his wife and child, in a covered wagon. He asked me to go with him, and I was strongly tempted to do so. (*There is great sadness in his tone—but he seems to collect himself, and turns to her again, speaking with a sort*

of resignation.) But then I knew that was not my direction. The way I must go is the way you have always wanted me to go.

MARY. And you will promise that never again will you falter, or turn to run away?

ABE. I promise, Mary—if you will have me—I shall devote myself for the rest of my days to trying—to do what is right—as God gives me power to see what is right.

[She looks at him, trying to search him. She would like to torment him, for a while, with artful indecision. But she cannot do it.]

MARY. Very well then—I shall be your wife. I shall fight by your side—till death do us part. *(She runs to him and clutches him.)* Abe! I love you—oh, I love you! Whatever becomes of the two of us, I'll die loving you! *(She is sobbing wildly on his shoulder. Awkwardly, he lifts his hands and takes hold of her in a loose embrace. He is staring down at the carpet, over her shoulder.)*

CURTAIN

END OF ACT II

ACT THREE—SCENE IX

A SPEAKERS' PLATFORM *in an Illinois town. It is a summer evening in the year 1858.*

A light shines down on the speaker at the front of the platform.

At the back of the platform are three chairs. At the right sits JUDGE STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS—at the left, ABE, who has his plug hat on and makes occasional notes on a piece of paper on his knee. The chair in the middle is for NINIAN, acting as Moderator, who is now at the front of the platform.

NINIAN. We have now heard the leading arguments from the two candidates for the high office of United States Senator from Illinois—Judge Stephen A. Douglas and Mr. Abraham Lincoln. A series of debates between these two eminent citizens of Illinois has focused upon our state the attention of the entire nation, for here are being discussed the vital issues which now affect the lives of all Americans and the whole future history of our beloved country. According to the usual custom of debate, each of the candidates will now speak in rebuttal. . . . Judge Douglas.

[NINIAN retires and sits, as DOUGLAS comes forward. He is a brief but magnetic man, confident of his powers.]

DOUGLAS. My fellow citizens: My good friend, Mr. Lincoln, has addressed you with his usual artless sincerity, his pure, homely charm, his perennial native humor. He has even devoted a generously large portion of his address to most amiable remarks upon my fine qualities as a man, if not as a statesman. For which I express deepest gratitude. But—at the same time—I most earnestly beg you not to be deceived by his seeming innocence, his carefully

cultivated spirit of good will. For in each of his little homilies lurk concealed weapons. Like Brutus, in Shakespeare's immortal tragedy, Mr. Lincoln is an honorable man. But, also like Brutus, he is an adept at the art of inserting daggers between an opponent's ribs, just when said opponent least expects it. Behold me, gentlemen—I am covered with scars. And yet—somehow or other—I am still upright. Perhaps because I am supported by that sturdy prop called "Truth." Truth—which, crushed to earth by the assassin's blades, doth rise again! Mr. Lincoln makes you laugh with his pungent anecdotes. Then he draws tears from your eyes with his dramatic pictures of the plight of the black slave labor in the South. Always, he guides you skilfully to the threshold of truth, but then, as you are about to cross it, diverts your attention elsewhere. For one thing—he never, by any mischance, makes reference to the condition of labor here in the North! Oh, no! Perhaps New England is so far beyond the bounds of his parochial ken that he does not know that tens of thousands of working men and women in the textile industry are now on STRIKE! And why are they on strike? Because from early morning to dark of night—fourteen hours a day—those "free" citizens must toil at shattering looms in soulless factories and never see the sun; and then, when their fearful day's work at last comes to its exhausted end, these ill-clad and undernourished laborers must trudge home to their foul abodes in tenements that are not fit habitations for rats! What kind of Liberty is this? And if Mr. Lincoln has not heard of conditions in Massachusetts—how has it escaped his attention that here in our own great state no wheels are now turning on that mighty railroad, the Illinois Central? Because its oppressed workers are also on STRIKE! Because they too demand a living wage! So it is throughout the North. Hungry men, marching through the streets in ragged order, promoting riots, because they are not paid enough to keep the flesh upon the bones of their babies! What kind of Liberty is *this*? And what kind of equality? Mr. Lincoln harps constantly on this subject of equality. He repeats over and over the argument used by Lovejoy and other abolitionists: to wit, that the Declaration of Independence having declared all men free and equal, by divine law, thus Negro equality is an inalienable right. Contrary to this absurd assumption stands the verdict of the Supreme Court, as it was clearly stated by Chief Justice Taney in the case of Dred Scott. The Negroes are established by this decision as an inferior race of beings, subjugated by the dominant race, enslaved and, therefore, *property*—like all other property! But Mr. Lincoln is inclined to dispute the constitutional authority of the Supreme Court. He has implied, if he did not say so outright, that the Dred Scott decision was a prejudiced one, which must be over-ruled by the voice of the people. Mr. Lincoln is a lawyer, and I presume, therefore, that he knows that when he seeks to destroy public confidence in the integrity, the inviolability of the Supreme Court, he is preaching *revolution*! He is attempting to stir up odium and rebellion in this country against the constituted authorities; he is stimulating the passions of men to resort to violence and to mobs, instead of to the law. He is setting brother against brother! There can be but one consequence of such inflammatory persuasion—and that is *Civil War*!

He asks me to state my opinion of the Dred Scott decision, and I answer him unequivocally by saying, "I take the decisions of the Supreme Court as the law of the land, and I intend to obey them as such!" Nor will I be swayed from that position by all the rantings of all the fanatics who preach "racial equality," who ask us to vote, and eat, and sleep, and marry with Negroes! And I say further—Let each State mind its own business and leave its neighbors alone. If we will stand by that principle, then Mr. Lincoln will find that this great republic can exist forever divided into free and slave states. We can go on as we have done, increasing in wealth, in population, in power, until we shall be the admiration and the terror of the world! (*He glares at the audience, then turns, mopping his brow, and resumes his seat.*)

NINIAN (*rising*). Mr. Lincoln.

[*ABE glances at his notes, takes his hat off, puts the notes in it, then rises slowly and comes forward. He speaks quietly, reasonably. His words come from an emotion so profound that it needs no advertisement.*]

ABE. Judge Douglas has paid tribute to my skill with the dagger. I thank him for that, but I must also admit that he can do more with that weapon than I can. He can keep ten daggers flashing in the air at one time. Fortunately, he's so good at it that none of the knives ever falls and hurts anybody. The Judge can condone slavery in the South and protest hotly against its extension to the North. He can crowd loyalty to the Union and defense of states' sovereignty into the same breath. Which reminds me—and I hope the Judge will allow me one more homely little anecdote, because I'd like to tell about a woman down in Kentucky. She came out of her cabin one day and found her husband grappling with a ferocious bear. It was a fight to the death, and the bear was winning. The struggling husband called to his wife, "For heaven's sake, *help* me!" The wife asked what could *she* do? Said the husband, "You could at least *say* something encouraging." But the wife didn't want to seem to be taking sides in this combat, so she just hollered, "Go it husband—go it bear!" Now, you heard the Judge make allusion to those who advocate voting and eating and marrying and sleeping with Negroes. Whether he meant me specifically, I do not know. If he did, I can say that just because I do not want a colored woman for a slave, I don't necessarily want her for a wife. I need not have her for either. I can just leave her alone. In some respects, she certainly is not my equal, any more than I am the Judge's equal, in some respects; but in her natural right to eat the bread she earns with her own hands without asking leave of someone else, she is my equal, and the equal of all others. And as to sleeping with Negroes—the Judge may be interested to know that the slave states have produced more than four hundred thousand mulattoes—and I don't think many of them are the children of abolitionists. That word "abolitionists" brings to mind New England, which also has been mentioned. I assure Judge Douglas that I have been there, and I have seen those cheerless brick prisons called factories, and the workers trudging silently home through the darkness. In those factories, cotton that was picked by black slaves is woven into cloth by white people who are separated from slavery by no more than fifty cents a day. As an American, I cannot be

proud that such conditions exist. But—as an American—I can ask: would any of those striking workers in the North elect to change places with the slaves in the South? Will they not rather say, “The remedy is in *our* hands!” And, still as an American, I can say—thank God we live under a system by which men have the *right* to strike! I am not preaching rebellion. I don’t have to. This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. If the founding fathers gave us anything, they gave us that. And I am not preaching disrespect for the Supreme Court. I am only saying that the decisions of mortal men are often influenced by unjudicial bias—and the Supreme Court is composed of mortal men, most of whom, it so happens, come from the privileged class in the South. There is an old saying that judges are just as honest as other men, and not more so; and in case some of you are wondering who said that, it was Thomas Jefferson. (*He has half turned to DOUGLAS.*) The purpose of the Dred Scott decision is to make property, and nothing but property, of the Negro in all states of the Union. It is the old issue of property rights versus human rights—an issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall long have been silent. It is the eternal struggle between two principles. The one is the common right of humanity and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same spirit that says, “You toil and work and earn bread, and I’ll eat it.” Whether those words come from the mouth of a king, who bestrides his people and lives by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men who seek to enslave another race, it is the same tyrannical principle. As a nation, we began by declaring, “All men are created equal.” There was no mention of any exceptions to the rule in the Declaration of Independence. But we now practically read it, “All men are created equal except Negroes.” If we accept this doctrine of race or class discrimination, what is to stop us from decreeing in the future that “All men are created equal except Negroes, foreigners, Catholics, Jews, or—just poor people?” That is the conclusion toward which the advocates of slavery are driving us. Many good citizens, North and South, agree with the Judge that we should accept that conclusion—don’t stir up trouble—“Let each State mind its own business.” That’s the safer course, for the time being. But—I advise you to watch out! When you have enslaved any of your fellow beings, dehumanized him, denied him all claim to the dignity of manhood, placed him among the beasts, among the damned, are you quite sure that the demon you have thus created, will not turn and rend *you*? When you begin qualifying freedom, watch out for the consequences to *you*! And I am not preaching civil war. All I am trying to do—now, and as long as I live—is to state and restate the fundamental virtues of our democracy, which have made us great, and which can make us greater. I believe most seriously that the perpetuation of those virtues is now endangered, not only by the honest proponents of slavery, but even more by those who echo Judge Douglas in shouting, “Leave it alone!” This is the complacent policy of indifference to evil, and that policy I cannot but hate. I hate

it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republic of its just influence in the world; enables the enemies of free institutions everywhere to taunt us as hypocrites; causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity; and especially because it forces so many good men among ourselves into an open war with the very fundamentals of civil liberty, denying the good faith of the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but *self-interest*. . . . In his final words tonight, the Judge said that we may be "the terror of the world." I don't think we want to be that. I think we would prefer to be the encouragement of the world, the proof that man is at last worthy to be free. But—we shall provide no such encouragement, unless we can establish our ability as a nation to live and grow. And we shall surely do neither if these states fail to remain *united*. There can be no distinction in the definitions of liberty as between one section and another, one race and another, one class and another. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." This government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free! (*He turns and goes back to his seat.*)

[*The lights fade.*]

END OF SCENE IX

ACT THREE—SCENE X

PARLOR of the Edwards home, now being used by the Lincolns. Afternoon of a day in the early Spring of 1860.

ABE is sitting on the couch at the right, with his seven-year-old son, TAD, on his lap. Sitting beside them is another son, WILLIE, aged nine. The eldest son, ROBERT, a young Harvard student of seventeen, is sitting by the window, importantly smoking a pipe and listening to the story ABE has been telling the children. JOSHUA SPEED is sitting at the left.

ABE. You must remember, Tad, the roads weren't much good then—mostly nothing more than trails—and it was hard to find my way in the darkness. . . .

WILLIE. Were you scared?

ABE. Yes—I was scared.

WILLIE. Of Indians?

ABE. No—there weren't any of them left around here. I was afraid I'd get lost, and the boy would die, and it would be all my fault. But, finally, I found the doctor. He was very tired, and wanted to go to bed, and he grumbled a lot, but I made him come along with me then and there.

WILLIE. Was the boy dead?

ABE. No, Willie. He wasn't dead. But he was pretty sick. The doctor gave him a lot of medicine.

TAD. Did it taste bad, Pa?

ABE. I presume it did. But it worked. I never saw those nice people again,

but I've heard from them every so often. That little boy was your age, Tad, but now he's a grown man with a son almost as big as you are. He lives on a great big farm, in a valley with a river that runs right down from the tops of the snow mountains. . . .

[MARY comes in.]

MARY. Robert! You are smoking in my parlor!

ROBERT (*wearily*). Yes, Mother. (*He rises.*)

MARY. I have told you that I shall not tolerate tobacco smoke in my parlor or, indeed, in any part of my house, and I mean to . . .

ABE. Come, come, Mary—you must be respectful to a Harvard man. Take it out to the woodshed, Bob.

ROBERT. Yes, Father.

MARY. And this will not happen again!

ROBERT. No, Mother. (*He goes out.*)

ABE. I was telling the boys a story about some pioneers I knew once.

MARY. It's time for you children to make ready for your supper.

[*The CHILDREN promptly get up to go.*]

WILLIE. But what happened after that, Pa?

ABE. Nothing. Everybody lived happily ever after. Now run along.

[*WILLIE and TAD run out.*]

JOSH. What time is it, Mary?

MARY. It's nearly half past four. (*She is shaking the smoke out of the curtains.*)

JOSH. Half past four, Abe. Those men will be here any minute.

ABE (*rising*). Good Lord!

MARY (*turning sharply to ABE*). What men?

ABE. Some men from the East. One of them's a political leader named Crimin—and there's a Mr. Sturveson—he's a manufacturer—and . . .

MARY (*impressed*). Henry D. Sturveson?

ABE. That's the one—and also the Reverend Dr. Barrick from Boston.

MARY (*sharply*). What are they coming here for?

ABE. I don't precisely know—but I suspect that it's to see if I'm fit to be a candidate for President of the United States. (*MARY is, for the moment, speechless.*) I suppose they want to find out if we still live in a log cabin and keep pigs under the bed.

MARY (*in a fury*). And you didn't tell me!

ABE. I'm sorry, Mary—the matter just slipped my . . .

MARY. You forgot to tell me that we're having the most important guests who ever crossed the threshold of my house!

ABE. They're not guests. They're only here on business.

MARY (*bitterly*). Yes! Rather important business, it seems to me. They want to see us as we *are*—crude, sloppy, vulgar Western barbarians, living in a house that reeks of foul tobacco smoke.

ABE. We can explain about having a son at Harvard.

MARY. If I'd only *known*! If you had only given me a little time to prepare for them. Why didn't you put on your best suit? And those filthy old boots!

ABE. Well, Mary, I clean forgot. . . .

MARY. I declare, Abraham Lincoln, I believe you would have treated me with much more consideration if I had been your slave, instead of your wife! You have never, for one moment, stopped to think that perhaps I have some interests, some concerns, in the life we lead together. . . .

ABE. I'll try to clean up my boots a little, Mary.

[*He goes out, glad to escape from this painful scene. MARY looks after him. Her lip is quivering. She wants to avoid tears.*]

MARY (*seating herself; bitterly*). You've seen it all, Joshua Speed. Every bit of it—courtship, if you could call it that, change of heart, change back again, and marriage, eighteen years of it. And you probably think just as all the others do—that I'm a bitter, nagging woman, and I've tried to kill his spirit, and drag him down to my level. . . .

[*JOSH rises and goes over to her.*]

JOSH (*quietly*). No, Mary. I think no such thing. Remember, I know Abe, too.

MARY. There never could have been another man such as he is! I've read about many that have gone up in the world, and all of them seemed to have to fight to assert themselves every inch of the way, against the opposition of their enemies and the lack of understanding in their own friends. But he's never had any of that. He's never had an enemy, and every one of his friends has always been completely confident in him. Even before I met him, I was told that he had a glorious future, and after I'd known him a day, I was sure of it myself. But he didn't believe it—or, if he did, secretly, he was so afraid of the prospect that he did all in his power to avoid it. He had some poem in his mind, about a life of woe, along a rugged path, that leads to some future doom, and it has been an obsession with him. All these years, I've tried and tried to stir him out of it, but all my efforts have been like so many puny waves, dashing against the Rock of Ages. And now, opportunity, the greatest opportunity, is coming here, to him, right into his own house. And what can I do about it? He *must* take it! He *must* see that this is what he was meant for! But I can't persuade him of it! I'm tired—I'm tired to death! (*The tears now come.*) I thought I could help to shape him, as I knew he should be, and I've succeeded in nothing—but in breaking myself. . . . (*She sobs bitterly.*)

[*JOSH sits down beside her and pats her hand.*]

JOSH (*tenderly*). I know, Mary. But—there's no reason in heaven and earth for you to reproach yourself. Whatever becomes of Abe Lincoln is in the hands of a God who controls the destinies of all of us, including lunatics, and saints.

[*ABE comes back.*]

ABE (*looking down at his boots*). I think they look all right now, Mary. (*He looks at MARY, who is now trying hard to control her emotion.*)

MARY. You can receive the gentlemen in here. I'll try to prepare some refreshment for them in the dining-room.

[*She goes out. ABE looks after her, miserably. There are a few moments of silence. At length, ABE speaks, in an off-hand manner.*]

ABE. I presume these men *are* pretty influential.

JOSH. They'll have quite a say in the delegations of three states that may swing the nomination away from Seward.

ABE. Suppose, by some miracle, or fluke, they did nominate me; do you think I'd stand a chance of winning the election?

JOSH. An excellent chance, in my opinion. There'll be four candidates in the field, bumping each other, and opening up the track for a dark horse.

ABE. But the dark horse might run in the wrong direction.

JOSH. Yes—you can always do that, Abe. I know *I* wouldn't care to bet two cents on you.

ABE (*grinning*). It seems funny to be comparing it to a horserace, with an old, spavined hack like me. But I've had some mighty energetic jockeys—Mentor Graham, Bowling Green, Bill Herndon, you, and Mary—most of all, Mary.

JOSH (*looking at ABE*). They don't count now, Abe. You threw 'em all, long ago. When you finally found yourself running against poor little Douglas, you got the bit between your teeth and went like greased lightning. You'd do the same thing to him again, if you could only decide to get started, which you probably won't . . . (*The doorbell jangles. JOSH gets up.*)

ABE. I expect that's them now.

JOSH. I'll go see if I can help Mary. (*He starts for the door but turns and looks at ABE, and speaks quietly.*) I'd just like to remind you, Abe—there are pretty nearly thirty million people in this country; most of 'em are common people, like you. They're in serious trouble, and they need somebody who understands 'em, as you do. So—when these gentlemen come in—try to be a *little* bit polite to them. (*ABE grins. JOSH looks off.*) However—you won't listen to any advice from me.

[*JOSH goes. The door is opened by a MAID and STURVESON, BARRICK, and CRIMMIN come in. STURVESON is elderly, wealthy and bland. BARRICK is a soft Episcopalian dignitary. CRIMMIN is a shrewd, humorous fixer.*]

ABE. Come right in, gentlemen. Glad to see you again, Mr. Crimmin. (*They shake hands.*)

CRIMMIN. How de do, Mr. Lincoln. This is Dr. Barrick of Boston, and Mr. Sturveson of Philadelphia.

DR. BARRICK. Mr. Lincoln.

STURVESON. I'm honored, Mr. Lincoln.

LINCOLN. Thank you, sir. Pray sit down, gentlemen.

STURVESON. Thank you.

[*They sit.*]

CRIMMIN. Will Mrs. Lincoln seriously object if I light a seegar?

LINCOLN. Go right ahead! I regret that Mrs. Lincoln is not here to receive you, but she will join us presently. (*He sits down.*)

BARRICK (*with great benignity*). I am particularly anxious to meet Mrs. Lin-

coln, for I believe, with Mr. Longfellow, that "as unto the bow the cord is, so unto the man is woman."

STURVESON (*very graciously*). And we are here dealing with a bow that is stout indeed. (ABE *bows slightly in acknowledgment of the compliment*.) And one with a reputation for shooting straight. So you'll forgive us, Mr. Lincoln, for coming directly to the point.

ABE. Yes, sir. I understand that you wish to inspect the prairie politician in his native lair, and here I am.

STURVESON. It is no secret that we are desperately in need of a candidate—one who is sound, conservative, safe—and clever enough to skate over the thin ice of the forthcoming campaign. Your friends—and there's an increasingly large number of them throughout the country—believe that you are the man.

ABE. Well, Mr. Sturveson, I can tell you that when first I was considered for political office—that was in New Salem, twenty-five years ago—I assured my sponsors of my conservatism. I have subsequently proved it, by never progressing anywhere.

BARRICK (*smiling*). Then you agree that you are the man we want?

ABE. I'm afraid I can't go quite that far in self-esteem, Dr. Barrick, especially when you have available a statesman and gentleman as eminent as Mr. Seward who, I believe, is both ready and willing.

STURVESON. That's as may be. But please understand that this is not an inquisition. We merely wish to know you better, to gain a clearer idea of your theories on economics, religion and national affairs, in general. To begin with—in one of your memorable debates with Senator Douglas, your opponent indulged in some of his usual demagoguery about industrial conditions in the North, and you replied shrewdly that whereas the slaves in the South . . .

ABE. Yes, I remember the occasion. I replied that I was thankful that laborers in free states have the right to strike. But that wasn't shrewdness, Mr. Sturveson. It was just the truth.

STURVESON. It has gained for you substantial support from the laboring classes, which is all to the good. But it has also caused a certain amount of alarm among business men, like myself.

ABE. I cannot enlarge on the subject. It seems obvious to me that this nation was founded on the supposition that men have the right to protest, violently if need be, against authority that is unjust or oppressive. (*He turns to BARRICK.*) The Boston Tea Party was a kind of strike. So was the Revolution itself. (*Again to STURVESON.*) So was Nicholas Biddle's attempt to organize the banks against the Jackson administration.

STURVESON. Which is all perfectly true—but—the days of anarchy are over. We face an unprecedented era of industrial expansion—mass production of every conceivable kind of goods—railroads and telegraph lines across the continent—all promoted and developed by private enterprise. In this great work, we must have a free hand, and a firm one, Mr. Lincoln. To put it bluntly, would you, if elected, place the interests of labor above those of capital?

ABE. I cannot answer that, bluntly, or any other way; because I cannot tell what I should do, if elected.

STURVESON. But you must have inclinations toward one side or the other. . . .

ABE. I think you know, Mr. Sturveson, that I am opposed to slavery.

BARRICK. And we of New England applaud your sentiments! We deplore the inhumanity of our Southern friends in . . .

ABE (*to BARRICK*). There are more forms of slavery than that which is inflicted upon the Negroes in the South. I am opposed to all of them. (*He turns again to STURVESON.*) I believe in our democratic system—the just and generous system which opens the way to all—gives hope to all, and consequent energy and progress and improvement of condition to all, including employer and employee alike.

BARRICK. We support your purpose, Mr. Lincoln, in steadfastly proclaiming the rights of men to resist unjust authority. But I am most anxious to know whether you admit One Authority to whom devotion is unquestioned?

ABE. I presume you refer to the Almighty?

BARRICK. I do.

ABE. I think there has never been any doubt of my submission to His will.

BARRICK. I'm afraid there is a great deal of doubt as to your devotion to His church.

ABE. I realize that, Doctor. They say I'm an atheist, because I've always refused to become a church member.

BARRICK. What have been the grounds of your refusal?

ABE. I have found no churches suitable for my own form of worship. I could not give assent without mental reservations to the long, complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterize their Articles of Belief and Confessions of Faith. But I can promise you, Dr. Barrick—I shall gladly join any church at any time if its sole qualification for membership is obedience to the Saviour's statement of Law and Gospel: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." . . . But—I beg you gentlemen to excuse me for a moment. I believe Mrs. Lincoln is preparing a slight collation, and I must see if I can help with it. . . .

CRIMMIN. Certainly, Mr. Lincoln. (*ABE goes, closing the door behind him. CRIMMIN looks at the door, then turns to the others.*) Well?

BARRICK. The man is unquestionably an infidel. An idealist—in his curious, primitive way—but an infidel!

STURVESON. And a radical!

CRIMMIN. A radical? Forgive me, gentlemen, if I enjoy a quiet laugh at that.

STURVESON. Go ahead and enjoy yourself, Crimmin—but I did not like the way he evaded my direct question. I tell you, he's as unscrupulous a demagogue as Douglas. He's a rabble rouser!

CRIMMIN. Of course he is! As a dealer in humbug, he puts Barnum himself to shame.

STURVESON. Quite possibly—but he is not *safe*!

CRIMMIN. Not safe, eh? And what do you mean by that?

STURVESON. Just what I say. A man who devotes himself so whole-heartedly

to currying favor with the mob develops the mob mentality. He becomes a preacher of discontent, of mass unrest. . . .

CRIMMIN. And what about Seward? If we put him up, he'll start right in demanding liberation of the slaves—and then there *will* be discontent and unrest! I ask you to believe me when I tell you that this Lincoln *is* safe—in economics and theology and everything else. After all—what is the essential qualification that we demand of the candidate of our party? It is simply this: that he be able to get himself elected! And there is the man who can do that. (*He points off-stage.*)

STURVESON (*smiling*). I should like to believe you!

BARRICK. So say we all of us!

CRIMMIN. Then just keep faith in the eternal stupidity of the voters, which is what *he* will appeal to. In that uncouth rail splitter you may observe one of the smoothest, slickest politicians that ever hoodwinked a yokel mob! You complain that he evaded your questions. Of course he did, and did it perfectly! Ask him about the labor problem, and he replies, "I believe in democracy." Ask his views on religion, and he says, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Now—you know you couldn't argue with that, either of you. I tell you, gentlemen, he's a vote-getter if I ever saw one. His very name is right—Abraham Lincoln! Honest Old Abe! He'll play the game with us now, and he'll go right on playing it when we get him into the White House. He'll do just what we tell him. . . .

DR. BARRICK (*cautioning him*). Careful, Mr. Crimmin. . . .

[*ABE returns.*]

ABE. If you gentlemen will step into the dining-room, Mrs. Lincoln would be pleased to serve you with a cup of tea.

BARRICK. Thank you.

STURVESON. This is most gracious. (*He and BARRICK move off toward the door.*)

ABE. Or perhaps something stronger for those who prefer it.

[*STURVESON and BARRICK go. CRIMMIN is looking for a place to throw his cigar.*]

ABE (*heartily*). Bring your seegar with you, Mr. Crimmin!

CRIMMIN. Thank you—thank you!

[*He smiles at ABE, gives him a slap on the arm, and goes out, ABE following. The lights fade.*]

END OF SCENE X

ACT THREE—SCENE XI

LINCOLN campaign headquarters in the Illinois State House. The evening of Election Day, November 6th, 1860.

It is a large room with a tall window opening out on to a wide balcony. There are doors upper right and upper left. At the left is a table littered with newspapers and clippings. There are many chairs about, and a liberal supply of spittoons.

At the back is a huge chart of the thirty-three states, with their electoral votes, and a space opposite each side for the posting of bulletins. A short ladder gives access to Alabama and Arkansas at the top of the list.

On the wall at the left is an American flag. At the right is a map of the United States, on which each state is marked with a red, white or blue flag.

ABE is sitting at the table, with his back to the audience, reading newspaper clippings. He wears his hat and has spectacles on. MRS. LINCOLN is sitting at the right of the table, her eyes darting nervously from ABE, to the chart, to the map. She wears her bonnet, tippet and muff.

ROBERT LINCOLN is standing near her, studying the map. NINIAN EDWARDS is sitting at the left of the table and JOSH SPEED is standing near the chart. They are both smoking cigars and watching the chart.

The door at the left is open, and through it the clatter of telegraph instruments can be heard. The window is partly open, and we can hear band music from the square below, and frequent cheers from the assembled mob, who are watching the election returns flashed from a magic lantern on the State House balcony.

Every now and then, a telegraph operator named JED comes in from the left and tacks a new bulletin up on the chart. Another man named PHIL is out on the balcony taking bulletins from JED.

ROBERT. What do those little flags mean, stuck into the map?

JOSH. Red means the state is sure for us. White means doubtful. Blue means hopeless.

[ABE tosses the clipping he has been reading on the table and picks up another.]

[JED comes in and goes up to pin bulletins opposite Illinois, Maryland and New York.]

NINIAN (rising to look). Lincoln and Douglas neck and neck in Illinois.

[JOSH and ROBERT crowd around the chart.]

JOSH. Maryland is going all for Breckenridge and Bell. Abe—you're nowhere in Maryland.

MARY (with intense anxiety). What of New York?

JED (crossing to the window). Say, Phil—when you're not getting bulletins, keep that window closed. We can't hear ourselves think.

PHIL. All right. Only have to open 'er up again. (He closes the window.)

MARY. What does it say about New York?

[JED goes.]

NINIAN. Douglas a hundred and seventeen thousand—Lincoln a hundred and six thousand.

MARY (desperately, to ABE). He's winning from you in New York, Abe!

JOSH. Not yet, Mary. These returns so far are mostly from the city where Douglas is bound to run the strongest.

ABE (interested in a clipping). I see the New York *Herald* says I've got the soul of a Uriah Heep encased in the body of a baboon. (He puts the clipping aside and starts to read another.)

NINIAN (*who has resumed his seat*). You'd better change that flag on Rhode Island from red to white, Bob. It looks doubtful to me.

[ROBERT, *glad of something to do, changes the flag as directed.*]

MARY. What does it look like in Pennsylvania, Ninian?

NINIAN. There's nothing to worry about there, Mary. It's safe for Abe. In fact, you needn't worry at all.

MARY (*very tense*). Yes. You've been saying that over and over again all evening. There's no need to worry. But how can we help worrying when every new bulletin shows Douglas ahead.

JOSH. But every one of them shows Abe gaining.

NINIAN (*mollifying*). Just give them time to count all the votes in New York and then you'll be on your way to the White House.

MARY. Oh, why don't they hurry with it? Why don't those returns come in?

ABE (*preoccupied*). They'll come in—soon enough.

[BILLY HERNDON *comes in from the right. He has been doing a lot of drinking but has hold of himself.*]

BILLY. That mob down there is sickening! They cheer every bulletin that's flashed on the wall, whether the news is good or bad. And they cheer every picture of every candidate, including George Washington, with the same, fine, ignorant enthusiasm.

JOSH. That's logical. They can't tell 'em apart.

BILLY (*to ABE*). There are a whole lot of reporters down there. They want to know what will be your first official action after you're elected.

NINIAN. What do you want us to tell 'em, Abe?

ABE (*still reading*). Tell 'em I'm thinking of growing a beard.

JOSH. A beard?

NINIAN (*amused*). Whatever put that idea into your mind?

ABE (*picking up another clipping*). I had a letter the other day from some little girl. She said I ought to have whiskers, to give me more dignity. And I'll need it—if elected.

[JED *arrives with new bulletins. BILLY, NINIAN, JOSH and ROBERT huddle around JED, watching him post the bulletins.*]

MARY. What do they say now?

[JED *goes to the window and gives some bulletins to PHIL.*]

MARY. Is there anything new from New York?

NINIAN. Connecticut—Abe far in the lead. That's eleven safe electoral votes anyway. Missouri—Douglas thirty-five thousand—Bell thirty-three—Breckenridge sixteen—Lincoln, eight. . . .

[*Cheers from the crowd outside until PHIL closes the window. JED returns to the office at the left.*]

MARY. What are they cheering for?

BILLY. They don't know!

ABE (*with another clipping*). The *Chicago Times* says, "Lincoln breaks down! Lincoln's heart fails him! His tongue fails him! His legs fail him! He

fails all over! The people refuse to support him! They laugh at him! Douglas is champion of the people! Douglas skins the living dog!"

[*He tosses the clipping aside. MARY stands up.*]

MARY (*her voice is trembling*). I can't stand it any longer!

ABE. Yes, my dear—I think you'd better go home. I'll be back before long.

MARY (*hysterical*). I won't go home! You only want to be rid of me. That's what you've wanted ever since the day we were married—and before that. Anything to get me out of your sight, because you hate me! (*Turning to JOSH, NINIAN and BILLY.*) And it's the same with all of you—all of his friends—you hate me—you wish I'd never come into his life.

JOSH. No, Mary.

[*ABE has stood up, quickly, at the first storm signal. He himself is in a fearful state of nervous tension—in no mood to treat MARY with patient indulgence. He looks sharply at NINIAN and at the others.*]

ABE. Will you please step out for a moment?

NINIAN. Certainly, Abe.

[*He and the others go into the telegraph office. JOSH gestures to ROBERT to go with them. ROBERT casts a black look at his mother and goes. . . . ABE turns on MARY with strange savagery.*]

ABE. Damn you! Damn you for taking every opportunity you can to make a public fool of me—and yourself! It's bad enough, God knows, when you act like that in the privacy of our own home. But here—in front of people! You're not to do that again. Do you hear me? You're never to do that again!

[*MARY is so aghast at this outburst that her hysterical temper vanishes, giving way to blank terror.*]

MARY (*in a faint, strained voice*). Abe! You cursed at me. Do you realize what you did? You cursed at me.

[*ABE has the impulse to curse at her again, but with considerable effort, he controls it.*]

ABE (*in a strained voice*). I lost my temper, Mary. And I'm sorry for it. But I still think you should go home rather than endure the strain of this—this Death Watch.

[*She stares at him, uncomprehendingly, then turns and goes to the door.*]

MARY (*at the door*). This is the night I dreamed about, when I was a child, when I was an excited young girl, and all the gay young gentlemen of Springfield were courting me, and I fell in love with the least likely of them. This is the night when I'm waiting to hear that my husband has become President of the United States. And even if he does—it's ruined, for me. It's too late. . . .

[*She opens the door and goes out. ABE looks after her, anguished, then turns quickly, crosses to the door at the left and opens it.*]

ABE (*calling off*). Bob! (*ROBERT comes in.*) Go with your Mother.

ROBERT. Do I have to?

ABE. Yes! Hurry! Keep right with her till I get home.

[*ROBERT has gone. ABE turns to the window. PHIL opens it.*]

PHIL. Do you think you're going to make it, Mr. Lincoln?

ABE. Oh—there's nothing to worry about.

CROWD OUTSIDE (*singing*).

Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness
Out of the wilderness
Out of the wilderness
Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness
Down in Illinois!

[NINIAN, JOSH, BILLY, and JED come in, the latter to post new bulletins. After JED has communicated these, PHIL again closes the window. JED goes.]

NINIAN. It looks like seventy-four electoral votes sure for you. Twenty-seven more probable. New York's will give you the election.

[ABE walks around the room. JOSH has been looking at ABE.]

JOSH. Abe, could I get you a cup of coffee?

ABE. No, thanks, Josh.

NINIAN. Getting nervous, Abe?

ABE. No. I'm just thinking what a blow it would be to Mrs. Lincoln if I should lose.

NINIAN. And what about me? I have ten thousand dollars bet on you.

BILLY (*scornfully*). I'm afraid that the loss to the nation would be somewhat more serious than that.

JOSH. How would you feel, Abe?

ABE (*sitting on the chair near the window*). I guess I'd feel the greatest sense of relief of my life.

[JED comes in with a news despatch.]

JED. Here's a news despatch. (*He hands it over and goes.*)

NINIAN (*reads*). "Shortly after nine o'clock this evening, Mr. August Belmont stated that Stephen A. Douglas has piled up a majority of fifty thousand votes in New York City and carried the state."

BILLY. Mr. Belmont be damned!

[CRIMMIN comes in, smoking a cigar, looking contented.]

CRIMMIN. Good evening, Mr. Lincoln. Good evening, gentlemen—and how are you all feeling now?

[*They all greet him.*]

NINIAN. Look at this, Crimmin. (*He hands the despatch to CRIMMIN.*)

CRIMMIN (*smiles*). Well—Belmont is going to fight to the last ditch, which is just what he's lying in now. I've been in Chicago and the outlook there is cloudless. In fact, Mr. Lincoln, I came down tonight to protect you from the office-seekers. They're lining up downstairs already. On the way in I counted four Ministers to Great Britain and eleven Secretaries of State.

[JED has come in with more bulletins to put on the chart and then goes to the window to give PHIL the bulletins.]

BILLY (*at the chart*). There's a bulletin from New York! Douglas a hundred and eighty-three thousand—Lincoln a hundred and eighty-one thousand!

[JED goes.]

JOSH. Look out, Abe. You're catching up!

CRIMMIN. The next bulletin from New York will show you winning. Mark

my words, Mr. Lincoln, this election is all wrapped up tightly in a neat bundle, ready for delivery on your doorstep tonight. We've fought the good fight, and we've won!

ABE (*pacing up and down the room*). Yes—we've fought the good fight—in the dirtiest campaign in the history of corrupt politics. And if I have won, then I must cheerfully pay my political debts. All those who helped to nominate and elect me must be paid off. I have been gambled all around, bought and sold a hundred times. And now I must fill all the dishonest pledges made in my name.

NINIAN. We realize all that, Abe—but the fact remains that you're winning. Why, you're even beating the coalition in Rhode Island!

ABE. I've got to step out for a moment. (*He goes out at the right.*)

NINIAN (*cheerfully*). Poor Abe.

CRIMMIN. You gentlemen have all been close friends of our Candidate for a long time so perhaps you could answer a question that's been puzzling me considerably. Can I possibly be correct in supposing that he doesn't want to win?

JOSH. The answer is—yes.

CRIMMIN (*looking toward the right*). Well—I can only say that, for me, this is all a refreshingly new experience.

BILLY (*belligerently*). Would *you* want to become President of the United States at this time? Haven't you been reading the newspapers lately?

CRIMMIN. Why, yes—I try to follow the events of the day.

BILLY (*in a rage*). Don't you realize that they've raised ten thousand volunteers in South Carolina? They're arming them! The Governor has issued a proclamation saying that if Mr. Lincoln is elected, the state will secede tomorrow, and every other state south of the Dixon line will go with it. Can you see what that means? War! Civil War! And *he'll* have the whole terrible responsibility for it—a man who has never wanted anything in his life but to be let alone, in peace!

NINIAN. Calm down, Billy. Go get yourself another drink.

[JED rushes in.]

JED. Mr. Edwards, here it is! (*He hands a news despatch to NINIAN, then rushes to the window to attract PHIL's attention and communicate the big news.*)

NINIAN (*reads*). "At 10:30 tonight the New York *Herald* conceded that Mr. Lincoln has carried the state by a majority of at least twenty-five thousand and has won the election!" (*He tosses the despatch in the air.*) He's won! He's won! Hurrah!

[*All on the stage shout, cheer, embrace and slap each other.*]

BILLY. God be praised! God be praised!

CRIMMIN. I knew it! I never had a doubt of it!

[JED is on the balcony, shouting through a megaphone.]

JED. Lincoln is elected! Honest Old Abe is our next President!

[*A terrific cheer ascends from the crowd below. ABE returns. They rush at him.*

BILLY shakes hands with him, too deeply moved to speak.]

NINIAN. You've carried New York, Abe! You've won! Congratulations!

CRIMMIN. My congratulations, Mr. President. This is a mighty achievement for all of us!

[JED comes in and goes to ABE.]

JED. My very best, Mr. Lincoln!

ABE (*solemnly*). Thank you—thank you all very much. (*He comes to the left. JOSH is the last to shake his hand.*)

JOSH. I congratulate you, Abe.

ABE. Thanks, Josh.

NINIAN. Listen to them, Abe. Listen to that crazy, howling mob down there.

CRIMMIN. It's all for you, Mr. Lincoln.

NINIAN. Abe, get out there and let 'em see you!

ABE. No. I don't want to go out there. I—I guess I'll be going on home, to tell Mary. (*He starts toward the door.*)

[*A short, stocky officer named KAVANAGH comes in from the right. He is followed by two soldiers.*]

CRIMMIN. This is Captain Kavanagh, Mr. President.

KAVANAGH (*salutes*). I've been detailed to accompany you, Mr. Lincoln, in the event of your election.

ABE. I'm grateful, Captain. But I don't need you.

KAVANAGH. I'm afraid you've got to have us, Mr. Lincoln. I don't like to be alarming, but I guess you know as well as I do what threats have been made.

ABE (*wearily*). I see . . . Well—Good night, Josh—Ninian—Mr. Crimmin—Billy. Thank you for your good wishes. (*He starts for the door. The others bid him good night, quietly.*)

KAVANAGH. One moment, sir. With your permission, I'll go first.

[*He goes out, ABE after him, the two other soldiers follow. The light fades.*]

END OF SCENE XI

ACT THREE—SCENE XII

THE YARDS of the railroad station at Springfield. The date is February 11, 1861. At the right, at an angle toward the audience, is the back of a railroad car. From behind this, off to the upper left, runs a ramp. Flags and bunting are draped above.

In a row downstage are soldiers, with rifles and bayonets fixed, and packs on their backs, standing at ease. Off to the left is a large crowd, whose excited murmuring can be heard.

KAVANAGH is in the foreground. A BRAKEMAN with a lantern is inspecting the wheels of the car, at the left. A WORKMAN is at the right, polishing the rails of the car. KAVANAGH is pacing up and down, chewing a dead cigar. He looks at his watch. A swaggering MAJOR of militia comes down the ramp from the left.

MAJOR. I want you men to form up against this ramp. (*To KAVANAGH; with a trace of scorn.*) You seem nervous, Mr. Kavanagh.

KAVANAGH. Well—I am nervous. For three months I've been guarding the life of a man who doesn't give a damn what happens to him. I heard today that they're betting two to one in Richmond that he won't be alive to take the oath of office on March the 4th.

MAJOR. I'd like to take some of that money. The State Militia is competent to protect the person of our Commander-in-Chief.

KAVANAGH. I hope the United States Army is competent to help. But those Southerners are mighty good shots. And I strongly suggest that your men be commanded to keep watch through every window of every car, especially whenever the train stops—at a town, or a tank, or anywhere. And if any alarm is sounded, at any point along the line . . .

MAJOR (*a trifle haughty*). There's no need to command my men to show courage in an emergency.

KAVANAGH. No slur was intended, Major—but we must be prepared in advance for everything.

[*A brass band off to the left strikes up the campaign song, "Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness." The crowd starts to sing it, more and more voices taking it up. A CONDUCTOR comes out of the car and looks at his watch. There is a commotion at the left as NINIAN and ELIZABETH EDWARDS, and JOSH, BILLY and CRIMMIN come in and are stopped by the soldiers. The MAJOR goes forward, bristling with importance.*]

MAJOR. Stand back, there! Keep the crowd back there, you men!

NINIAN. I'm Mr. Lincoln's brother-in-law.

MAJOR. What's your name?

KAVANAGH. I know him, Major. That's Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, and Mr. Speed and Mr. Herndon with them. I know them all. You can let them through.

MAJOR. Very well. You can pass.

[*They come down to the right. The MAJOR goes off at the left.*]

CRIMMIN. How is the President feeling today? Happy?

NINIAN. Just as gloomy as ever.

BILLY (*emotionally*). He came down to the office, and when I asked him what I should do about the sign, "Lincoln and Herndon," he said, "Let it hang there. Let our clients understand that this election makes no difference to the firm. If I live, I'll be back some time, and then we'll go right on practising just as if nothing had happened."

ELIZABETH. He's always saying that—"If I live . . ."

[*A tremendous cheer starts and swells off-stage at the left. The MAJOR comes on, briskly.*]

MAJOR (*to KAVANAGH*). The President has arrived! (*To his men.*) Attention! (*The MAJOR strides down the platform and takes his position by the car, looking off to the left.*)

KAVANAGH (*to NINIAN and the others*). Would you mind stepping back there? We want to keep this space clear for the President's party.

[*They move upstage, at the right. The cheering is now very loud.*]

MAJOR. Present—Arms!

[*The soldiers come to the Present. The MAJOR salutes. Preceded by soldiers who are looking sharply to the right and left, ABE comes in from the left, along the platform. He will be fifty-two years old tomorrow. He wears a beard. Over his shoulders is his plaid shawl. In his right hand he carries his carpet-bag; his left hand is leading TAD. Behind him are MARY, ROBERT and WILLIE, and the MAID. All, except MARY, are also carrying bags. She carries a bunch of flowers. When they come to the car, ABE hands his bag up to the CONDUCTOR, then lifts TAD up. MARY, ROBERT, WILLIE and the MAID get on board, while ABE steps over to talk to NINIAN and the others. During this, there is considerable commotion at the left, as the crowd tries to surge forward.*]

MAJOR (*rushing forward*). Keep 'em back! Keep 'em back, men!

[*The SOLDIERS have broken their file on the platform and are in line, facing the crowd. KAVANAGH and his men are close to ABE. Each of them has his hand on his revolver, and is keeping a sharp lookout.*]

KAVANAGH. Better get on board, Mr. President.

[*ABE climbs up on to the car's back platform. There is a great increase in the cheering when the crowd sees him. They shout: "Speech! Speech! Give us a speech, Abe! Speech, Mr. President! Hurray for Old Abe!" Etc. . . . ABE turns to the crowd, takes his hat off and waves it with a half-hearted gesture. The cheering dies down.*]

NINIAN. They want you to say something, Abe.

[*For a moment, ABE stands still, looking off to the left.*]

ABE. My dear friends—I have to say good-bye to you. I am going now to Washington, with my new whiskers—of which I hope you approve.

[*The crowd roars with laughter at that. More shouts of "Good Old Abe!" In its exuberant enthusiasm, the crowd again surges forward, at and around the SOLDIERS, who shout, "Get back, there! Stand back, you!"*]

ABE (*to the MAJOR*). It's all right—let them come on. They're all old friends of mine.

[*The MAJOR allows his men to retreat so that they form a ring about the back of the car. KAVANAGH and his men are on the car's steps, watching. The crowd—an assortment of townspeople, including some Negroes—fills the stage.*]

ABE. No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feelings of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of you people, I owe everything. I have lived here a quarter of a century, and passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return. I am called upon to assume the Presidency at a time when eleven of our sovereign states have announced their intention to secede from the Union, when threats of war increase in fierceness from day to day. It is a grave duty which I now face. In preparing for it, I have tried to enquire: what great principle or ideal is it that has kept this Union so long together? And I believe that it was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the

Declaration of Independence which gave liberty to the people of this country and hope to all the world. This sentiment was the fulfillment of an ancient dream, which men have held through all time, that they might one day shake off their chains and find freedom in the brotherhood of life. We gained democracy, and now there is the question whether it is fit to survive. Perhaps we have come to the dreadful day of awakening, and the dream is ended. If so, I am afraid it must be ended forever. I cannot believe that ever again will men have the opportunity we have had. Perhaps we should admit that, and concede that our ideals of liberty and equality are decadent and doomed. I have heard of an eastern monarch who once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence which would be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him the words, "And this too shall pass away." That is a comforting thought in time of affliction—"And this too shall pass away." And yet—(*Suddenly he speaks with quiet but urgent authority.*)—let us believe that it is not true! Let us live to prove that we can cultivate the natural world that is about us, and the intellectual and moral world that is within us, so that we may secure an individual, social and political prosperity, whose course shall be forward, and which, while the earth endures, shall not pass away. . . . I commend you to the care of the Almighty, as I hope that in your prayers you will remember me. . . . Good-bye, my friends and neighbors.

[*He leans over the railing of the car platform to say good-bye to NINIAN, ELIZABETH, JOSH, BILLY and CRIMMIN, shaking each by the hand. The band off-stage strikes up "John Brown's Body." The cheering swells. The CONDUCTOR looks at his watch and speaks to the MAJOR, who gets on board the train. The crowd on stage is shouting "Good-bye, Abe," "Good-bye, Mr. Lincoln," "Good luck, Abe," "We trust you, Mr. Lincoln."*]

[*As the band swings into the refrain, "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah," the crowd starts to sing, the number of voices increasing with each word.*]

[*KAVANAGH tries to speak to ABE but can't be heard. He touches ABE's arm, and ABE turns on him, quickly.*]

KAVANAGH. Time to pull out, Mr. President. Better get inside the car.

[*These words cannot be heard by the audience in the general uproar of singing. NINIAN, ELIZABETH, JOSH and BILLY are up on the station platform. The SOLDIERS are starting to climb up on to the train. ABE gives one last wistful wave of his hat to the crowd, then turns and goes into the car, followed by KAVANAGH, the MAJOR and the SOLDIERS. The band reaches the last line of the song.*]

ALL (*singing*). His soul goes marching on.

[*The BRAKEMAN, downstage, is waving his lantern. The CONDUCTOR swings aboard. The crowd is cheering, waving hats and handkerchiefs. The shrill screech of the engine whistle sounds from the right.*]

CURTAIN

T R P Y O E T R P Y O E T R P Y O E

A NOTE ON POETRY

POETRY may be said to be the artistic development of man's natural tendency to rhythmic expression under the stress of emotion. Children, primitive peoples, and the unlettered in civilized societies enjoy, value, and employ poetic and rhythmic forms even more commonly than the most literate modern persons. It is only to the half-educated, those victims of an imperfect educational system, stranded between childhood and maturity, that poetic expression seems unnatural.

Many old English ballads like *Kemp Owyne*, *Bonny Barbara Allan*, and *Lord Randal* have long been and still are the living literature of the common man, often preserved from generation to generation only by word of mouth. In our own country the Negroes have created innumerable songs of great beauty. Spirituals like *Go Down, Moses*, *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, and *All God's Chillun Got Wings* are among the finest and most original of all hymns. More personally, individual Negroes have sung of their own problems in "blues" songs like *Go Down, You Little Red Rising Sun*, a "prison holler" sung by Roscoe McLean, a tubercular prisoner serving a long sentence for highway robbery. But Americans have always been a singing people and their history is often written in the songs they have sung. *A Home on the Range* summarizes the unquenchable optimism of the westward movement which carried men surging across a continent. *Chilly Winds* was the theme song of the migratory workers in the nineteen-thirties on their dismal trek westward out of the dust bowl.

In narrative poetry subjects and their treatment are as various as in the short story. Emphasis may be upon character, action, tone or mood (sometimes called "atmosphere"), or an idea or theme. The subject may be a realistic one of the present day; it may be an historical one far removed in time; it may be an excursion into fantasy or the supernatural. Narrative poems may also be roughly divided into those which use the narrative methods of prose fiction and those which are more closely akin to drama. Group I consists of straightforward narratives in the first or third persons. Group II is composed of what are generally called dramatic lyrics or monologues, wherein a dramatic character speaks lyrically or as in a soliloquy in a drama (the dramatic lyric), or wherein he speaks to other persons in a carefully arranged setting (the dramatic monologue.) Thus *The Hollow Men* is obviously a dramatic lyric, *The Bishop Orders His Tomb* as obviously a dramatic monologue; but of course these categories tend to overlap.

To many persons, poetry means lyric poetry, and rightly so. Stories may be told as well in prose as in verse, though perhaps less succinctly and possibly

less beautifully. Lyric poetry, however, is unique, since it is by definition an imaginative, melodic expression of the poet's own emotion. Since it is so highly personal, lyrics are no more alike than men are alike. So various are the poetic forms in which a lyric may be written that merely to list them here would be absurd. A poet may create literally any metrical pattern he chooses, provided only that it be appropriate. So too with the emotions expressed. All men are more or less subject to such basic emotions as love, hate, fear, anger, sorrow, and so on, but the gradations and interplay of these basic emotions are infinitely varied. A lyric is one man's emotional reaction to some aspect of the external world or the world of the spirit, and no two men view either world from exactly the same point. Among the poems which follow a number record the different poets' reactions to a universal and recurring experience: the seasons of the year. Certainly there is no monotony in their reactions. Far less is there monotony when they react to the world of men and of God.¹

¹ The student will wish to reread at this point the pertinent comments by Melville Cane in "Making a Poem," page 20, and by Louis Untermeyer and Carter Davidson in "The Prejudice Against Poetry," page 35.

Songs and Ballads

GO DOWN, MOSES

Go down, Moses,
'Way down in Egypt land;
Tell ole Pharaoh
To let my people go.

When Israel was in Egypt's land
(Let my people go)
Oppressed so hard they could not stand
(Let my people go),

"Thus spoke the Lord," bold Moses said:
"Let my people go.
If not I'll smite your first-born dead.
Let my people go."

Go down, Moses,
'Way down in Egypt land;
Tell ole Pharaoh
To let my people go,
O let my people go.

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT

Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home.
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home.

I look'd over Jordan, an' what did I see
Comin' for to carry me home?
A band of angels comin' after me,
Comin' for to carry me home.

If you get-a dere befo' I do
(Comin' for to carry me home),
Tell all my friends I'm comin' too
(Comin' for to carry me home).

Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home.
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home.

ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT WINGS

I got a robe, you got a robe,
All o' God's Chillun got a robe.
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to put on my robe,
I'm goin' to shout all ovah God's Heab'n,
Heab'n, Heab'n,—
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere;
Heab'n, Heab'n,
I'm goin' to shout all ovah God's Heab'n.

I got-a wings, you got-a wings,
All o' God's Chillun got-a wings.

"Go Down, Moses," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "All God's Chillun Got Wings," from *The Books of American Negro Spirituals* by James Weldon Johnson and J. Rosamond Johnson. Copyright 1925, 1926 by The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

"Mamma, Mamma, you just pray,
Great Godamighty, for me,
And I never will do wrong,
Great Godamighty, no more.

"I ain't killed no man and I ain't robbed,
Great Godamighty, no train,
And I ain't did no man,
Great Godamighty, no crime."

CHILLY WINDS

I'm goin' where them chilly winds won't blow, darlin' baby,
I'm goin' where them chilly winds won't blow,
When I'm goin' to my long lonesome home.

Oh, make me a pallet on the floor, darlin' baby,
Oh, make me a pallet on the floor,
For I'm goin' to my long lonesome home.

Now who'll be your partner when I'm gone, darlin' baby,
Now who'll be your partner when I'm gone,
When I'm gone to my long lonesome home?

Oh, who'll hoe your corn when I'm gone, darlin' baby,
Oh, who'll hoe your corn when I'm gone,
When I'm gone to my long lonesome home?

Who'll stir the gravy when I'm gone, darlin' baby,
Who'll stir the gravy when I'm gone,
When I'm gone to my long lonesome home?

Oh, it's way down in jail on my knees, darlin' baby,
Oh, it's way down in jail on my knees,
And I'm goin' to my long lonesome home.

Oh, they feed me on corn bread and peas, darlin' baby,
Oh, they feed me on corn bread and peas,
And I'm goin' to my long lonesome home.

I ain't got but one old rusty dime, darlin' baby,
I ain't got but one old rusty dime,
And I'm goin' to my long lonesome home.

Oh, I'll have a new dollar some old day, darlin' baby,
Oh, I'll have a new dollar some old day,
And I'll throw this old rusty dime away.

Back, back, old freight train, get your load, darlin' baby,
Back, back, old freight train, get your load,
When I'm goin' to my long lonesome home.

Oh, I'm goin' where the climate suits my clothes, darlin' baby,
Oh, I'm goin' where the climate suits my clothes,
When I'm goin' to my long lonesome home.

A HOME ON THE RANGE

Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam,
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Where the air is so pure, the zephyrs so free,
The breezes so balmy and light,
That I would not exchange my home on the range
For all the cities so bright.

The red man was pressed from this part of the West,
He's likely no more to return
To the banks of Red River where seldom if ever
Their flickering campfires burn.

How often at night when the heavens are bright
With the light of the glittering stars,
Have I stood there amazed and asked as I gazed
If their glory exceeds that of ours.

Oh, I love these wild flowers in this dear land of ours;
The curlew I love to hear scream;
And I love the white rocks and the antelope flocks
That graze on the mountain-tops green.

Oh, give me a land where the bright diamond sand
Flows leisurely down the stream;
Where the graceful white swan goes gliding along
Like a maid in a heavenly dream.

Then I would not exchange my home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

KEMP OWYNE

Her mother died when she was young,
Which gave her cause to make great moan;
Her father married the warst woman
That ever lived in Christendom.

She servèd her with foot and hand,
In every thing that she could dee,
Till once, in an unlucky time,
She threw her in ower Craigy's sea.

Says, "Lie you there, dove Isabel,
And all my sorrows lie with thee;
Till Kemp Owyne come ower the sea,
And borrow you with kisses three.
Let all the warld do what they will,
Oh borrowed shall you never be!"

Her breath grew strang, her hair grew lang,
And twisted thrice about the tree,
And all the people, far and near,
Thought that a savage beast was she.

These news did come to Kemp Owyne,
Where he lived, far beyond the sea;
He hasted him to Craigy's sea,
And on the savage beast lookd he.

Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted was about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
"Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.

"Here is a royal belt," she cried,
"That I have found in the green sea;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;
But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I vow my belt your death shall be."

He stepped in, gave her a kiss,
The royal belt he brought him wi;
Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted twice about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
"Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.

"Here is a royal ring," she said,
"That I have found in the green sea;
And while your finger it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;

But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my ring your death shall be."

He stepped in, gave her a kiss,
The royal ring he brought him wi;
Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted ance about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
"Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.

"Here is a royal brand," she said,
"That I have found in the green sea;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;
But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my brand your death shall be."

He stepped in, gave her a kiss,
The royal brand he brought him wi;
Her breath was sweet, her hair grew short,
And twisted nane about the tree,
And smilingly she came about,
As fair a woman as fair could be.

BONNY BARBARA ALLAN

It was in and about the Martinmas time,
When the green leaves were a falling,
That Sir John Graeme, in the West Country,
Fell in love with Barbara Allan.

He sent his man down through the town,
To the place where she was dwelling:
"O haste and come to my master dear,
Gin ye be Barbara Allan."

O hooly, hooly rose she up,
To the place where he was lying,
And when she drew the curtain by,
"Young man, I think you're dying."

"O it's I'm sick, and very, very sick,
And 'tis a' for Barbara Allan":
"O the better for me ye's never be,
Tho your heart's blood were a spilling.

"O dinna ye mind, young man," said she,
"When ye was in the tavern a drinking.
That ye made the healths gae round and
round,
And slighted Barbara Allan?"

He turned his face unto the wall,
 And death was with him dealing:
 "Adieu, adieu, my dear friends all,
 And be kind to Barbara Allan."

And slowly, slowly raise she up,
 And slowly, slowly left him,
 And sighing said she could not stay,
 Since death of life had reft him.

She had not gane a mile but twa,
 When she heard the dead-bell ringing,
 And every jow that the dead-bell geid,
 It cry'd, Woe to Barbara Allan!

"O mother, mother, make my bed!
 O make it saft and narrow!
 Since my love died for me today,
 I'll die for him tomorrow."

LORD RANDAL

"O where ha you been, Lord Randal, my son?
 And where ha you been, my handsome young man?"
 "I ha been at the greenwood; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down."

"And wha met ye there, Lord Randal, my son?
 An wha met you there, my handsome young man?"
 "I met wi my true-love; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down."

"And what did she give you, Lord Randal, my son?
 And what did she give you, my handsome young man?"
 "Eels fried in a pan; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down."

"And wha gat your leavins, Lord Randal, my son?
 And wha gat your leavins, my handsome young man?"
 "My hawks and my hounds; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down."

"And what becam of them, Lord Randal, my son?
 And what becam of them, my handsome young man?"
 "They stretched their legs out an died; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down."

"O I fear you are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!
 I fear you are poisoned, my handsome young man!"
 "O yes, I am poisoned; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down."

"What d' ye leave to your mother, Lord Randal, my son?
 What d' ye leave to your mother, my handsome young man?"
 "Four and twenty milk kye; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down."

"What d' ye leave to your sister, Lord Randal, my son?
 What d' ye leave to your sister, my handsome young man?"
 "My gold and my silver; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down."

"What d' ye leave to your brother, Lord Randal, my son?
 What d' ye leave to your brother, my handsome young man?"
 "My houses and my lands; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down."

"What d' ye leave to your true-love, Lord Randal, my son?
 What d' ye leave to your true-love, my handsome young man?"
 "I leave her hell and fire; mother, mak my bed soon,
 For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down."

Narrative Poems I

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON (1869-1935) devoted his life to the writing of poetry and was rewarded by great popularity in the decade after the first World War. Three times he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize: for his *Collected Poems* in 1921, and for his two long narrative poems, *The Man Who Died Twice* (1924) and *Tristram* (1927). His popularity was due not only to his great technical skill as a poet, but also in no small measure to his obsession with the moods and ideas of disillusion and pessimism so characteristic of the post-war period. His narratives, whether on ancient or modern subjects, are seldom happy, and he is perhaps most commonly known today for his keen psychological portraits of frustrated and defeated men like *Miniver Cheevy*, *Bewick Finzer*, and *Richard Cory*.

MINIVER CHEEVY

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
 Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
 He wept that he was ever born,
 And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
 When swords were bright and steeds were
 prancing;
 The vision of a warrior bold
 Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
 And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
 He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
 And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
 That made so many a name so fragrant;
 He mourned Romance, now on the town,
 And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
 Albeit he had never seen one;
 He would have sinned incessantly
 Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace
 And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
 He missed the mediaeval grace
 Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
 But sore annoyed was he without it;

"Miniver Cheevy" from *The Town Down the River* by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
And kept on drinking.

BEWICK FINZER

Time was when his half million drew
The breath of six per cent;
But soon the worm of what-was-not
Fed hard on his content;
And something crumbled in his brain
When his half million went.

Time passed, and filled along with his
The place of many more;
Time came, and hardly one of us
Had credence to restore,
From what appeared one day, the man
Whom we had known before.

The broken voice, the withered neck,
The coat worn out with care,
The cleanliness of indigence,
The brilliance of despair,
The fond imponderable dreams
Of affluence,—all were there.

Poor Finzer, with his dreams and schemes,
Fares hard now in the race,
With heart and eye that have a task
When he looks in the face

Of one who might so easily
Have been in Finzer's place.

He comes unfailing for the loan
We give and then forget;
He comes, and probably for years
Will he be coming yet,—
Familiar as an old mistake,
And futile as regret.

RICHARD CORY

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he
talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
"Good-morning," and he glittered when he
walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king,
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his
place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed
the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his
head.

"Bewick Finzer," from *Collected Poems* by Edwin Arlington Robinson. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

STEPHEN VINCENT BENET and ROSEMARY BENET ¹

JOHN ADAMS

1735-1826

The old rutted roads have been turned to macadams,
But Quincy and Braintree remember the Adams.

There was John and John Quincy, Charles Francis and Brooks
And Henry, who wrote most remarkable books.

And a number of others I will not describe,
But John—this is he—was the first of the tribe.

The son of a farmer, a lawyer by trade,
He was always on hand when our Nation was made.

A statesman of genius, a patriot of zeal,
He was vain as Old Harry but true as cold steel.

He founded our Navy, from rudder to mast,
He saw that the bold Declaration was passed.

But he kept us from war with the French at a time
When to fight would have been little less than a crime.

For he wasn't hot-headed, though stubborn and fiery
And given to writing mean things in his diary.

He served but one term in the President's chair,
And his foes made it hot for him while he was there.

But, at eighty years old, he was still going strong
And convinced that no Adams could ever be wrong.

And his sons and his grandsons and all of his stock
Were chips of the selfsame, identical block.

Remarkable men, with the tart Adams quirk,
And the same Adams talent for doing good work

"John Adams," "Thomas Jefferson," and "Daniel Boone," from *A Book of Americans*, published by Farrar & Rinehart. Copyright, 1933, by Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benét.

¹ See p. 315 for biographical sketch of Stephen Vincent Benét. Mrs. Benét collaborated with her husband on this series of poems.

In spite of the tumult which always arose
When they carefully trod upon other folks' toes.

For their crotchets were theirs, but their virtues the Nation's,
And they served us superbly for four generations.

They could irritate Job, but they never were small.
—And this is John Adams, who started them all.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

1743-1826

Thomas Jefferson
What do you say
Under the gravestone
Hidden away?

"I was a giver,
I was a moulder,
I was a builder
With a strong shoulder."

Six feet and over,
Large-boned and ruddy,
The eyes grey-hazel
But bright with study.

The big hands clever
With pen and fiddle
And ready, ever,
For any riddle.

From buying empires,
To planting 'taters,

From Declarations
To trick dumb-waiters.

"I liked the people,
The sweat and crowd of them,
Trusted them always
And spoke aloud of them.

"I liked all learning
And wished to share it
Abroad like pollen
For all who merit.

"I liked queer gadgets
And secret shelves,
And helping nations
To rule themselves."

DANIEL BOONE

1735-1820

When Daniel Boone goes by, at night,
The phantom deer arise
And all lost, wild America
Is burning in their eyes.

ROBERT FROST¹

THE CODE

There were three in the meadow by the brook
Gathering up windrows, piling cocks of hay,
With an eye always lifted toward the west

"The Code," and "Home Burial," from *Collected Poems* by Robert Frost. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

¹ See p. 1035 for biographical sketch of Robert Frost.

Where an irregular sun-bordered cloud
Darkly advanced with a perpetual dagger
Flickering across its bosom. Suddenly
One helper, thrusting pitchfork in the ground,
Marched himself off the field and home. One stayed.
The town-bred farmer failed to understand.

"What is there wrong?"

"Something you just now said."

"What did I say?"

"About our taking pains."

"To cock the hay?—because it's going to shower?
I said that more than half an hour ago.
I said it to myself as much as you."

"You didn't know. But James is one big fool.
He thought you meant to find fault with his work.
That's what the average farmer would have meant.
James would take time, of course, to chew it over
Before he acted: he's just got round to act."

"He is a fool if that's the way he takes me."

"Don't let it bother you. You've found out something.
The hand that knows his business won't be told
To do work better or faster—those two things.
I'm as particular as anyone:
Most likely I'd have served you just the same.
But I know you don't understand our ways.
You were just talking what was in your mind,
What was in all our minds, and you weren't hinting.
Tell you a story of what happened once:
I was up here in Salem at a man's
Named Sanders with a gang of four or five
Doing the haying. No one liked the boss.
He was one of the kind sports call a spider,
All wiry arms and legs that spread out wavy
From a humped body nigh as big's a biscuit.
But work! that man could work, especially
If by so doing he could get more work
Out of his hired help. I'm not denying
He was hard on himself. I couldn't find
That he kept any hours—not for himself.
Daylight and lantern-light were one to him:
I've heard him pounding in the barn all night.
But what he liked was someone to encourage.

Them that he couldn't lead he'd get behind
And drive, the way you can, you know, in mowing—
Keep at their heels and threaten to mow their legs off.
I'd seen about enough of his bulling tricks
(We call that bulling). I'd been watching him.
So when he paired off with me in the hayfield
To load the load, thinks I, Look out for trouble.
I built the load and topped it off; old Sanders
Combed it down with a rake and says, 'O.K.'
Everything went well till we reached the barn
With a big catch to empty in a bay.
You understand that meant the easy job
For the man up on top of throwing *down*
The hay and rolling it off wholesale,
Where on a mow it would have been slow lifting.
You wouldn't think a fellow'd need much urging
Under these circumstances, would you now?
But the old fool seizes his fork in both hands,
And looking up bewhiskered out of the pit,
Shouts like an army captain, 'Let her come!'
Thinks I, D'ye mean it? 'What was that you said?'
I asked out loud, so's there'd be no mistake,
'Did you say, Let her come?' 'Yes, let her come.'
He said it over, but he said it softer.
Never you say a thing like that to a man,
Not if he values what he is. God, I'd as soon
Murdered him as left out his middle name.
I'd built the load and knew right where to find it.
Two or three forkfuls I picked lightly round for
Like meditating, and then I just dug in
And dumped the rackful on him in ten lots.
I looked over the side once in the dust
And caught sight of him treading-water-like,
Keeping his head above. 'Damn ye,' I says,
'That 'gets ye!' He squeaked like a squeezed rat.
That was the last I saw or heard of him.
I cleaned the rack and drove out to cool off.
As I sat mopping hayseed from my neck,
And sort of waiting to be asked about it,
One of the boys sings out, 'Where's the old man?'
'I left him in the barn under the hay.
If ye want him, ye can go and dig him out.'
They realized from the way I swabbed my neck
More than was needed something must be up.
They headed for the barn; I stayed where I was.
They told me afterward. First they forked hay,
A lot of it, out into the barn floor.
Nothing! They listened for him. Not a rustle.
I guess they thought I'd spiked him in the temple
Before I buried him, or I couldn't have managed.

They excavated more. 'Go keep his wife
Out of the barn.' Someone looked in a window,
And curse me if he wasn't in the kitchen
Slumped way down in a chair, with both his feet
Stuck in the oven, the hottest day that summer.
He looked so clean disgusted from behind
There was no one that dared to stir him up,
Or let him know that he was being looked at.
Apparently I hadn't buried him
(I may have knocked him down); but my just trying
To bury him had hurt his dignity.
He had gone to the house so's not to meet me.
He kept away from us all afternoon.
We tended to his hay. We saw him out
After a while picking peas in his garden:
He couldn't keep away from doing something."

"Weren't you relieved to find he wasn't dead?"

"No! and yet I don't know—it's hard to say.
I went about to kill him fair enough."

"You took an awkward way. Did he discharge you?"

"Discharge me? No! He knew I did just right."

HOME BURIAL

He saw her from the bottom of the stairs
Before she saw him. She was starting down,
Looking back over her shoulder at some fear.
She took a doubtful step and then undid it
To raise herself and look again. He spoke
Advancing toward her: "What is it you see
From up there always—for I want to know?"
She turned and sank upon her skirts at that,
And her face changed from terrified to dull.
He said to gain time: "What is it you see?"
Mounting until she cowered under him.
"I will find out now—you must tell me, dear."
She, in her place, refused him any help
With the least stiffening of her neck and silence.
She let him look, sure that he wouldn't see,
Blind creature; and a while he didn't see.
But at last he murmured, "Oh," and again, "Oh."
"What is it—what?" she said.

"Just that I see."

"You don't," she challenged. "Tell me what it is."

"The wonder is I didn't see at once."

I never noticed it from here before.
 I must be wonted to it—that's the reason.
 The little graveyard where my people are!
 So small the window frames the whole of it.
 Not so much larger than a bedroom, is it?
 There are three stones of slate and one of marble,
 Broad-shouldered little slabs there in the sunlight
 On the sidehill. We haven't to mind *those*.
 But I understand: it is not the stones,
 But the child's mound—"

"Don't, don't, don't, don't," she cried.

She withdrew shrinking from beneath his arm
 That rested on the banister, and slid downstairs;
 And turned on him with such a daunting look,
 He said twice over before he knew himself:
 "Can't a man speak of his own child he's lost?"

"Not you! Oh, where's my hat? Oh, I don't need it!
 I must get out of here. I must get air.
 I don't know rightly whether any man can."

"Amy! Don't go to someone else this time.
 Listen to me. I won't come down the stairs."
 He sat and fixed his chin between his fists.
 "There's something I should like to ask you, dear."
 "You don't know how to ask it."

"Help me, then."

Her fingers moved the latch for all reply.

"My words are nearly always an offense.
 I don't know how to speak of anything
 So as to please you. But I might be taught
 I should suppose. I can't say I see how.
 A man must partly give up being a man
 With women-folk. We could have some arrangement
 By which I'd bind myself to keep hands off
 Anything special you're a-mind to name.
 Though I don't like such things 'twixt those that love.
 Two that don't love can't live together without them.
 But two that do can't live together with them."
 She moved the latch a little. "Don't—don't go.
 Don't carry it to someone else this time.
 Tell me about it if it's something human.
 Let me into your grief. I'm not so much
 Unlike other folks as your standing there
 Apart would make me out. Give me my chance.
 I do think, though, you overdo it a little.
 What was it brought you up to think it the thing

To take your mother-loss of a first child
So inconsolably—in the face of love.
You'd think his memory might be satisfied—"

"There you go sneering now!"

"I'm not, I'm not!

You make me angry. I'll come down to you.
God, what a woman! And it's come to this,
A man can't speak of his own child that's dead."

"You can't because you don't know how.
If you had any feelings, you that dug
With your own hand—how could you?—his little grave;
I saw you from that very window there,
Making the gravel leap and leap in air,
Leap up, like that, like that, and land so lightly
And roll back down the mound beside the hole.
I thought, Who is that man? I didn't know you.
And I crept down the stairs and up the stairs
To look again, and still your spade kept lifting.
Then you came in. I heard your rumbling voice
Out in the kitchen, and I don't know why,
But I went near to see with my own eyes.
You could sit there with the stains on your shoes
Of the fresh earth from your own baby's grave
And talk about your everyday concerns.
You had stood the spade up against the wall
Outside there in the entry, for I saw it."

"I shall laugh the worst laugh I ever laughed.
I'm cursed. God, if I don't believe I'm cursed."

"I can repeat the very words you were saying.
'Three foggy mornings and one rainy day
Will rot the best birch fence a man can build.'
Think of it, talk like that at such a time!
What had how long it takes a birch to rot
To do with what was in the darkened parlor?
You *couldn't* care! The nearest friends can go
With anyone to death, comes so far short
They might as well not try to go at all.
No, from the time when one is sick to death,
One is alone, and he dies more alone.
Friends make pretense of following to the grave,
But before one is in it, their minds are turned
And making the best of their way back to life
And living people, and things they understand.
But the world's evil. I won't have grief so
If I can change it. Oh, I won't, I won't!"

"There, you have said it all and you feel better.
You won't go now. You're crying. Close the door.

The heart's gone out of it: why keep it up?
Amy! There's someone coming down the road!"

"You—oh, you think the talk is all. I must go—
Somewhere out of this house. How can I make you—"
"If—you—do!" She was opening the door wider.
"Where do you mean to go? First tell me that.
I'll follow and bring you back by force. I *will*!"

WILLIAM MORRIS *No modern writer has surrendered himself more completely and successfully to the spirit of the Middle Ages and the fascination of ancient tales than William Morris (1834-1896), a man gifted with talent in most of the arts and crafts. The treatment of his romantic stories in prose and verse varies from the grim and graphic realism of The Haystack in the Floods to the dim mystery of poems like The Tune of Seven Towers, The Blue Closet, and The Wind.*

THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS

Had she come all the way for this,
To part at last without a kiss?
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain
That her own eyes might see him slain
Beside the haystack in the floods?
Along the dripping leafless woods,
The stirrup touching either shoe,
She rode astride as troopers do;
With kirtle kilted to her knee,
To which the mud splash'd wretchedly;
And the wet dripp'd from every tree
Upon her head and heavy hair,
And on her eyelids broad and fair;
The tears and rain ran down her face.

By fits and starts they rode apace,
And very often was his place
Far off from her; he had to ride
Ahead, to see what might betide
When the roads cross'd; and sometimes,
when
There rose a murmuring from his men,
Had to turn back with promises;
Ah me! she had but little ease;
And often for pure doubt and dread
She sobb'd, made giddy in the head
By the swift riding; while, for cold,

Her slender fingers scarce could hold
The wet reins; yea, and scarcely, too,
She felt the foot within her shoe
Against the stirrup: all for this,
To part at last without a kiss
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they near'd that old soak'd hay,
They saw across the only way
That Judas, Godmar, and the three
Red running lions dismally
Grinn'd from his pennon, under which
In one straight line along the ditch,
They counted thirty heads.

So then,
While Robert turn'd round to his men,
She saw at once the wretched end,
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend
Her coif the wrong way from her head,
And hid her eyes; while Robert said:
"Nay, love, 't is scarcely two to one;
At Poitiers where we made them run
So fast—why, sweet my love, good cheer,
The Gascon frontier is so near,
Nought after this."

But, "O," she said,
"My God! my God! I have to tread

The long way back without you; then
 The court at Paris; those six men;
 The gratings of the Chatelet;
 The swift Seine on some rainy day
 Like this, and people standing by,
 And laughing, while my weak hands try
 To recollect how strong men swim.
 All this, or else a life with him,
 For which I should be damned at last;
 Would God that this next hour were past!"

He answer'd not, but cried his cry,
 "St. George for Marny!" cheerily;
 And laid his hand upon her rein.
 Alas! no man of all his train
 Gave back that cheery cry again;
 And, while for rage his thumb beat fast
 Upon his sword-hilt, someone cast
 About his neck a kerchief long,
 And bound him.

Then they went along
 To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,
 Your lover's life is on the wane
 So fast, that, if this very hour
 You yield not as my paramour,
 He will not see the rain leave off—
 Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and scoff,
 Sir Robert, or I slay you now."

She laid her hand upon her brow,
 Then gazed upon the palm, as though
 She thought her forehead bled, and "No,"
 She said, and turn'd her head away,
 As there were nothing else to say,
 And everything were settled: red
 Grew Godmar's face from chin to head:
 "Jehane, on yonder hill there stands
 My castle, guarding well my lands:
 What hinders me from taking you,
 And doing that I list to do
 To your fair wilful body, while
 Your knight lies dead?"

A wicked smile
 Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,
 A long way out she thrust her chin:
 "You know that I should strangle you
 While you were sleeping; or bite through
 Your throat, by God's help—ah!" she said,

"Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!
 For in such wise they hem me in,
 I cannot choose but sin and sin,
 Whatever happens: yet I think
 They could not make me eat or drink,
 And so should I just reach my rest."
 "Nay, if you do not my behest,
 O Jehane! though I love you well,"
 Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell
 All that I know?" "Foul lies," she said.
 "Eh! lies, my Jehane? by God's head,
 At Paris folks would deem them true!
 Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you,
 'Jehane the brown! Jehane the brown!
 Give us Jehane to burn or drown!'—
 Eh—gag me Robert!—sweet my friend,
 This were indeed a piteous end
 For those long fingers, and long feet,
 And long neck, and smooth shoulders sweet;
 An end that few men would forget
 That saw it—So, an hour yet:
 Consider, Jehane, which to take
 Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,
 Dismounting, did she leave that place,
 And totter some yards: with her face
 Turn'd upward to the sky she lay,
 Her head on a wet heap of hay,
 And fell asleep: and while she slept,
 And did not dream, the minutes crept
 Round to the twelve again; but she,
 Being waked at last, sigh'd quietly,
 And strangely childlike came, and said:
 "I will not." Straightway Godmar's head,
 As though it hung on strong wires, turn'd
 Most sharply round, and his face burn'd.

For Robert—both his eyes were dry,
 He could not weep, but gloomily
 He seem'd to watch the rain; yea, too,
 His lips were firm; he tried once more
 To touch her lips; she reach'd out, sore
 And vain desire so tortured them,
 The poor grey lips, and now the hem
 Of his sleeve brush'd them.

With a start
 Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;
 From Robert's throat he loosed the bands

Of silk and mail; with empty hands
 Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw
 The long bright blade without a flaw
 Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his hand
 In Robert's hair; she saw him bend
 Back Robert's head; she saw him send
 The thin steel down; the blow told well,
 Right backward the knight Robert fell,
 And moan'd as dogs do, being half dead,
 Unwitting, as I deem: so then
 Godmar turn'd grinning to his men,
 Who ran, some five or six, and beat
 His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turn'd again and said:
 "So Jehane, the first fitte is read!
 Take note, my lady, that your way
 Lies backward to the Chatelet!"
 She shook her head and gazed awhile
 At her cold hands with a rueful smile,
 As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had
 Beside the haystack in the floods.

THE BLUE CLOSET

THE DAMOZELS

Lady Alice, Lady Louise,
 Between the wash of the tumbling seas
 We are ready to sing, if so ye please;
 So lay your long hands on the keys;
 Sing, "*Laudate pueri.*"

*And ever the great bell overhead
 Boomed in the wind a knell for the dead,
 Though no one tolled it, a knell for the dead.*

LADY LOUISE

Sister, let the measure swell
 Not too loud; for you sing not well
 If you drown the faint boom of the bell;
 He is weary, so am I.

*And ever the chevron overhead
 Flapped on the banner of the dead;
 (Was he asleep, or was he dead?)*

LADY ALICE

Alice the Queen, and Louise the Queen,
 Two damozels wearing purple and green,
 Four lone ladies dwelling here
 From day to day and year to year;
 And there is none to let us go;
 To break the locks of the doors below,
 Or shovel away the heaped-up snow;
 And when we die no man will know
 That we are dead; but they give us leave,
 Once every year on Christmas-eve,
 To sing in the Closet Blue one song;
 And we should be so long, so long,
 If we dared, in singing; for dream on dream,
 They float on in a happy stream;
 Float from the gold strings, float from the
 keys,
 Float from the opened lips of Louise;
 But, alas! the sea-salt oozes through
 The chinks of the tiles of the Closet Blue;

*And ever the great bell overhead
 Booms in the wind a knell for the dead,
 The wind plays on it a knell for the dead.*

[*They sing all together.*]

How long ago was it, how long ago,
 He came to this tower with hands full of
 snow?

"Kneel down, O love Louise, kneel down,"
 he said,
 And sprinkled the dusty snow over my head.
 He watched the snow melting, it ran through
 my hair,
 Ran over my shoulders, white shoulders and
 bare.

"I cannot weep for thee, poor love Louise,
 For my tears are all hidden deep under the
 seas;

"In a gold and blue casket she keeps all my
 tears,
 But my eyes are no longer blue, as in old
 years;

"Yea, they grow gray with time, grow small
 and dry,
 I am so feeble now, would I might die."

*And in truth the great bell overhead
Left off his pealing for the dead,
Perchance, because the wind was dead.*

Will he come back again, or is he dead?
O! is he sleeping, my scarf round his head?

Or did they strangle him as he lay there,
With the long scarlet scarf I used to wear?

Only I pray thee, Lord, let him come here!
Both his soul and his body to me are most
dear.

Dear Lord, that loves me, I wait to receive
Either body or spirit this wild Christmas-eve.

*Through the floor shot up a lily red,
With a patch of earth from the land of the
dead,*

For he was strong in the land of the dead.

What matter that his cheeks were pale,
His kind kissed lips all gray?
"O love Louise, have you waited long?"
"O my lord Arthur, yea."

What if his hair that brushed her cheek
Was stiff with frozen rime?
His eyes were grown quite blue again,
As in the happy time.

"O love Louise, this is the key
Of the happy golden land!
O sisters, cross the bridge with me,
My eyes are full of sand.
What matter that I cannot see,
If ye take me by the hand?"

*And ever the great bell overhead,
And the tumbling seas mourned for the
dead;*

For their song ceased, and they were dead.

ROY HELTON (b. 1886) *understands and portrays with quiet fidelity the simple lives, the language, and the strange attitudes of Kentucky mountain folk in his novel Nitchey Tilley (1934), which has the added interest of showing New York through the eyes of an unsophisticated mountain couple, and in his volume of folk-songs and ballads, Lonesome Water (1930), in which "Old Christmas" appears.*

OLD CHRISTMAS

"Where are you coming from, Lomey Carter,
So airly over the snow?
And what's them pretties you got in your hand,
And where are you aiming to go?"

"Step in, Honey: Old Christmas morning
I ain't got nothing much;
Maybe a bite of sweetness and corn bread,
A little ham meat and such.

"But come in, Honey! Sally Anne Barton's
Hungering after your face.

"Old Christmas," from *Lonesome Water* by Roy Helton. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Harper & Brothers.

Wait till I light my candle up:
Set down! There's your old place.

"Now where you been so airly this morning?"

*"Graveyard, Sally Anne.
Up by the trace in the salt lick meadows
Where Taulbe kilt my man."*

"Taulbe ain't to home this morning . . .
I can't scratch up a light:
Dampness gets on the heads of the matches;
But I'll blow up the embers bright."

*"Needn't trouble. I won't be stopping:
Going a long ways still."*

"You didn't see nothing, Lomey Carter,
Up on the graveyard hill?"

"What should I see there, Sally Anne Barton?"

"Well sperits do walk last night."

*"There were an elder bush a-blooming
While the moon still give some light."*

"Yes, elder bushes, they bloom, Old Christmas,
And critters kneel down in their straw.
Anything else up in the graveyard?"

*"One thing more I saw:
I saw my man with his head all bleeding
Where Taulbe's shot went through."*

"What did he say?"

"He stooped and kissed me."

"What did he say to you?"

*"Said, Lord Jesus forguv your Taulbe;
But he told me another word;
He said it soft when he stooped and kissed me.
That were the last I heard."*

"Taulbe ain't to home this morning."

*"I know that, Sally Anne,
For I kilt him, coming down through the meadow
Where Taulbe kilt my man."*

*"I met him upon the meadow trace
When the moon were fainting fast,*

*And I had my dead man's rifle gun
And kilt him as he come past."*

"But I heard two shots."

*"'Twas his was second:
He shot me 'fore he died:
You'll find us at daybreak, Sally Anne Barton:
I'm laying there dead at his side."*

STEPHEN VINCENT BENET¹

METROPOLITAN NIGHTMARE

It rained quite a lot, that spring. You woke in the morning
And saw the sky still clouded, the streets still wet,
But nobody noticed so much, except the taxis
And the people who parade. You don't, in a city.
The parks got very green. All the trees were green
Far into July and August, heavy with leaf,
Heavy with leaf and the long roots boring and spreading,
But nobody noticed that but the city gardeners
And they don't talk.

Oh, on Sundays, perhaps, you'd notice:
Walking through certain blocks, by the shut, proud houses
With the windows boarded, the people gone away,
You'd suddenly see the queerest small shoots of green
Poking through cracks and crevices in the stone
And a bird-sown flower, red on a balcony,
But then you made jokes about grass growing in the streets
And politics and grass-roots—and there were songs
And gags and a musical show called "Hot and Wet."
It all made a good box for the papers. When the flamingo
Flew into a meeting of the Board of Estimate,
The new Mayor acted at once and called the photographers.
When the first green creeper crawled upon Brooklyn Bridge,
They thought it was ornamental. They let it stay.

That was the year the termites came to New York
And they don't do well in cold climates—but listen, Joe,
They're only ants and ants are nothing but insects.
It was funny and yet rather wistful, in a way
(As Heywood Broun pointed out in the *World-Telegram*)
To think of them looking for wood in a steel city.

"Metropolitan Nightmare," from *Selected Works of Stephen Vincent Benét*, published by Farrar & Rinehart. Copyright, 1933, by Stephen Vincent Benét.

¹ See p. 315 for biographical sketch of Stephen Vincent Benét.

It made you feel about life. It was too divine.
 There were funny pictures by all the smart, funny artists
 And Macy's ran a terribly clever ad:
 "The Widow's Termite" or something.

There was no
 Disturbance. Even the Communists didn't protest
 And say they were Morgan hirelings. It was too hot,
 Too hot to protest, too hot to get excited,
 An even, African heat, lush, fertile and steamy,
 That soaked into bone and mind and never once broke.
 The warm rain fell in fierce showers and ceased and fell.
 Pretty soon you got used to its always being that way.

You got used to the changed rhythm, the altered beat,
 To people walking slower, to the whole bright
 Fierce pulse of the city slowing, to men in shorts,
 To the new sun-helmets from Best's and the cops' white uniforms,
 And the long noon-rest in the offices, everywhere.
 It wasn't a plan or anything. It just happened.
 The fingers tapped the keys slower, the office-boys
 Dozed on their benches, the bookkeeper yawned at his desk.
 The A. T. & T. was the first to change the shifts
 And establish an official siesta-room,
 But they were always efficient. Mostly it just
 Happened like sleep itself, like a tropic sleep,
 Till even the Thirties were deserted at noon
 Except for a few tourists and one damp cop.
 They ran boats to see the big lilies on the North River
 But it was only the tourists who really noticed
 The flocks of rose-and-green parrots and parrakeets
 Nesting in the stone crannies of the Cathedral.
 The rest of us had forgotten when they first came.

There wasn't any real change, it was just a heat spell,
 A rain spell, a funny summer, a weather-man's joke,
 In spite of the geraniums three feet high
 In the tin-can gardens of Hester and Desbrosses.
 New York was New York. It couldn't turn inside out.
 When they got the news from Woods Hole about the Gulf Stream,
 The *Times* ran an adequate story.
 But nobody reads those stories but science-cranks.

Until, one day, a somnolent city-editor
 Gave a new cub the termite yarn to break his teeth on.
 The cub was just down from Vermont, so he took the time.
 He was serious about it. He went around.
 He read all about termites in the Public Library
 And it made him sore when they fired him.

So, one evening,
 Talking with an old watchman, beside the first

Raw girders of the new Planetopolis Building
 (Ten thousand brine-cooled offices, each with shower)
 He saw a dark line creeping across the rubble
 And turned a flashlight on it.

“Say, buddy,” he said,
 “You better look out for those ants. They eat wood, you know,
 They’ll have your shack down in no time.”

The watchman spat.
 “Oh, they’ve quit eating wood,” he said, in a casual voice,
 “I thought everybody knew that.”

—and, reaching down,
 He pried from the insect jaws the bright crumb of steel.

NIGHTMARE NUMBER THREE

We had expected everything but revolt
 And I kind of wonder myself when they started thinking—
 But there’s no dice in that now.

I’ve heard fellows say
 They must have planned it for years and maybe they did.
 Looking back, you can find little incidents here and there,
 Like the concrete-mixer in Jersey eating the wop
 Or the roto press that printed “Fiddle-dee-dee!”
 In a three-color process all over Senator Sloop,
 Just as he was making a speech. The thing about that
 Was, how could it walk upstairs? But it was upstairs,
 Clicking and mumbling in the Senate Chamber.
 They had to knock out the wall to take it away
 And the wrecking-crew said it grinned.

It was only the best
 Machines, of course, the superhuman machines,
 The ones we’d built to be better than flesh and bone,
 But the cars were in it, of course . . .

and they hunted us
 Like rabbits through the cramped streets on that Bloody Monday,
 The Madison Avenue busses leading the charge.
 The busses were pretty bad—but I’ll not forget
 The smash of glass when the Duesenberg left the show-room
 And pinned three brokers to the Raquet Club steps
 Or the long howl of the horns when they saw men run,
 When they say them looking for holes in the solid ground . . .

I guess they were tired of being ridden in
 And stopped and started by pygmies for silly ends,
 Of wrapping cheap cigarettes and bad chocolate bars,
 Collecting nickels and waving platinum hair
 And letting six million people live in a town.

I guess it was that. I guess they got tired of us
And the whole smell of human hands.

But it was a shock

To climb sixteen flights of stairs to Art Zuckow's office
(Nobody took the elevators twice)
And find him strangled to death in a nest of telephones,
The octopus-tendrils waving over his head,
And a sort of quiet humming filling the air. . . .
Do they eat? . . . There was red . . . But I did not stop to look.
I don't know yet how I got to the roof in time
And it's lonely, here on the roof.

For a while, I thought

That window-cleaner would make it, and keep me company.
But they got him with his own hoist at the sixteenth floor
And dragged him in, with a squeal.
You see, they coöperate. Well, we taught them that
And it's fair enough, I suppose. You see, we built them.
We taught them to think for themselves.
It was bound to come. You can see it was bound to come.
And it won't be so bad, in the country. I hate to think
Of the reapers, running wild in the Kansas fields,
And the transport planes like hawks on a chickenyard,
But the horses might help. We might make a deal with the horses.
At least, you've more chance, out there.

And they need us, too.

They're bound to realize that when they once calm down.
They'll need oil and spare parts and adjustments and tuning up.
Slaves? Well, in a way, you know, we were slaves before.
There won't be so much real difference—honest, there won't.
(I wish I hadn't looked into that beauty-parlor
And seen what was happening there.
But those are female machines and a bit high-strung.)
Oh, we'll settle down. We'll arrange it. We'll compromise.
It wouldn't make sense to wipe out the whole human race.
Why, I bet if I went to my old Plymouth now
(Of course you'd have to do it the tactful way)
And said, "Look here! Who got you the swell French horn?"
He wouldn't turn me over to those police cars;
At least I don't think he would.

Oh, it's going to be jake.

There won't be so much real difference—honest, there won't—
And I'd go down in a minute and take my chance—
I'm a good American and I always liked them—
Except for one small detail that bothers me
And that's the food proposition. Because, you see,
The concrete-mixer may have made a mistake,
And it looks like just high spirits.
But, if it's got so they like the flavor . . . well . . .

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865-1936) *celebrated strength, ability, and efficiency wherever he found them, in men, machines, animals, or empires: themes which run through poems like "Tomlinson," "Gunga Din," and "The White Man's Burden," through many of his short stories in such volumes as Plain Tales from the Hills (1888), Soldiers Three (1888), and The Phantom 'Rickshaw (1889), and even through his animal stories for children, The Jungle Books (1894-95). Yet his work embodies far more than a delight in the strong, for Kipling had a sense of humor and a sense of tragedy, tenderness as well as toughness, and a remarkable command of words suited to a great variety of effects.*

TOMLINSON

Now Tomlinson gave up the ghost at his house in Berkeley Square,
 And a Spirit came to his bedside and gripped him by the hair—
 A Spirit gripped him by the hair and carried him far away,
 Till he heard as the roar of a rain-fed ford the roar of the Milky Way:
 Till he heard the roar of the Milky Way die down and drone and cease,
 And they came to the Gate within the Wall where Peter holds the keys.
 "Stand up, stand up now, Tomlinson, and answer loud and high
 The good that ye did for the sake of men or ever ye came to die—
 The good that ye did for the sake of men on little earth so lone!"
 And the naked soul of Tomlinson grew white as a rain-washed bone.
 "O I have a friend on earth," he said, "that was my priest and guide,
 And well would he answer all for me if he were at my side."
 —"For that ye strove in neighbour-love it shall be written fair,
 But now ye wait at Heaven's Gate and not in Berkeley Square:
 Though we called your friend from his bed this night, he could not speak for you,
 For the race is run by one and one and never by two and two."
 Then Tomlinson looked up and down, and little gain was there,
 For the naked stars grinned overhead, and he saw that his soul was bare.
 The Wind that blows between the Worlds, it cut him like a knife,
 And Tomlinson took up the tale and spoke of his good in life.
 "O this I have read in a book," he said, "and that was told to me,
 And this I have thought that another man thought of a Prince in Muscovy."
 The good souls flocked like homing doves and bade him clear the path,
 And Peter twirled the jangling Keys in weariness and wrath.
 "Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have thought," he said, "and the tale is yet to run:
 By the worth of the body that once ye had, give answer—what ha' ye done?"
 Then Tomlinson looked back and forth, and little good it bore,
 For the darkness stayed at his shoulder-blade and Heaven's Gate before:—
 "O this I have felt, and this I have guessed, and this I have heard men say,
 And this they wrote that another man wrote of a carl in Norroway."

"Tomlinson," from *Departmental Ditties and Barrack-Room Ballads*, by Rudyard Kipling, copyright, 1899, by Rudyard Kipling, reprinted by permission of Mrs. Bambridge and Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

"Ye have read, ye have felt, ye have guessed, good lack! Ye have hampered
Heaven's Gate;

There's little room between the stars in idleness to prate!
O none may reach by hired speech of neighbour, priest, and kin
Through borrowed deed to God's good need that lies so fair within;
Get hence, get hence to the Lord of Wrong, for the doom has yet to run,
And . . . the faith that ye share with Berkeley Square uphold you, Tomlinson!"

* * *

The Spirit gripped him by the hair, and sun by sun they fell
Till they came to the belt of Naughty Stars that rim the mouth of Hell.
The first are red with pride and wrath, the next are white with pain,
But the third are black with clinkered sins that cannot burn again:
They may hold their path, they may leave their path, with never a soul to mark,
They may burn or freeze, but they must not cease in the Scorn of the Outer Dark.
The Wind that blows between the Worlds, it nipped him to the bone,
And he yearned to the flare of Hell-gate there as the light of his own hearth-stone.
The Devil he sat behind the bars, where the desperate legions drew,
But he caught the hasting Tomlinson and would not let him through.
"Wot ye the price of good pit-coal that I must pay?" said he,
"That ye rank yoursel' so fit for Hell and ask no leave of me?
I am all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that ye should give me scorn,
For I strove with God for your First Father the day that he was born.
Sit down, sit down upon the slag, and answer loud and high
The harm that ye did to the Sons of Men or ever you came to die."
And Tomlinson looked up and up, and saw against the night
The belly of a tortured star blood-red in Hell-Mouth light;
And Tomlinson looked down and down, and saw beneath his feet
The frontlet of a tortured star milk-white in Hell-Mouth heat.
"O I had a love on earth," said he, "that kissed me to my fall;
And if ye would call my love to me I know she would answer all."
—"All that ye did in love forbid it shall be written fair,
But now ye wait at Hell-Mouth Gate and not in Berkeley Square:
Though we whistled your love from her bed tonight, I trow she would not run,
For the sin ye do by two and two ye must pay for one by one!"
The Wind that blows between the Worlds, it cut him like a knife,
And Tomlinson took up the tale and spoke of his sins in life:—
"Once I ha' laughed at the power of Love and twice at the grip of the Grave,
And thrice I ha' patted my God on the head that men might call me brave."
The Devil he blew on a brandered soul and set it aside to cool:—
"Do ye think I would waste my good pit-coal on the hide of a brain-sick fool?
I see no worth in the hobnailed mirth or the jolthead jest ye did
That I should waken my gentlemen that are sleeping three on a grid."
Then Tomlinson looked back and forth, and there was little grace.
For Hell-Gate filled the houseless soul with the Fear of Naked Space.
"Nay, this I ha' heard," quo' Tomlinson, "and this was noised abroad,
And this I ha' got from a Belgian book on the word of a dead French lord."
—"Ye ha' heard, ye ha' read, ye ha' got, good lack! and the tale begins afresh—
Have ye sinned one sin for the pride o' the eye or the sinful lust of the flesh?"
Then Tomlinson he gripped the bars and yammered, "Let me in—
For I mind that I borrowed my neighbour's wife to sin the deadly sin."

The Devil he grinned behind the bars, and banked the fires high:
 "Did ye read of that sin in a book?" said he; and Tomlinson said, "Ay!"
 The Devil he blew upon his nails, and the little devils ran,
 And he said: "Go husk this whimpering thief that comes in the guise of a man:
 Winnow him out 'twixt star and star, and sieve his proper worth:
 There's sore decline in Adam's line if this be spawn of earth."
 Empusa's crew, so naked-new they may not face the fire,
 But weep that they bin too small to sin to the height of their desire,
 Over the coal they chased the Soul, and racked it all abroad,
 As children rifle a caddis-case or the raven's foolish hoard.
 And back they came with the tattered Thing, as children after play,
 And they said: "The soul that he got from God he has bartered clean away.
 We have threshed a stook of print and book, and winnowed a chattering wind,
 And many a soul wherefrom he stole, but his we cannot find.
 We have handled him, we have dandled him, we have seared him to the bone,
 And Sire, if tooth and nail show truth he has no soul of his own."
 The Devil he bowed his head on his breast and rumbled deep and low:—
 "I'm all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that I should bid him go.
 Yet close we lie, and deep we lie, and if I gave him place,
 My gentlemen that are so proud would flout me to my face;
 They'd call my house a common stew and me a careless host,
 And—I would not anger my gentlemen for the sake of a shiftless ghost."
 The Devil he looked at the mangled Soul that prayed to feel the flame,
 And he thought of Holy Charity, but he thought of his own good name:—
 "Now ye could haste my coal to waste, and sit ye down to fry.
 Did ye think of that theft for yourself?" said he; and Tomlinson said, "Ay!"
 The Devil he blew an outward breath, for his heart was free from care:—
 "Ye have scarce the soul of a louse," he said, "but the roots of sin are there.
 And for that sin should ye come in were I the lord alone.
 But sinful pride has rule inside—ay, mightier than my own.
 Honour and Wit, fore-damned they sit, to each his Priest and Whore;
 Nay, scarce I dare myself go there, and you they'd torture sore.
 Ye are neither spirit nor spirk," he said; "ye are neither book nor brute—
 Go, get ye back to the flesh again for the sake of Man's repute.
 I'm all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that I should mock your pain,
 But look that ye win to worthier sin ere ye come back again.
 Get hence, the hearse is at your door—the grim black stallions wait—
 They bear your clay to place today. Speed, lest ye come too late!
 Go back to Earth with a lip unsealed—go back with an open eye,
 And carry my word to the Sons of Men or ever ye come to die:
 That the sin they do by two and two they must pay for one by one,
 And . . . the God that you took from a printed book be with you, Tomlinson!"

E. B. WHITE (*b. 1899*) is best known as a member of the staff of *The New Yorker* and a writer for "The Talk of the Town" department of that magazine, although he has written for various publications. Among his works are *Is Sex Necessary?* or, *Why You Feel the Way You Do* (1929), a satire on pseudo-scientific sex literature written in collaboration with James Thurber, *The*

Fox of Peapack and Other Poems (1938), a volume of light verse which includes "I Paint What I See," and One Man's Meat (1942), a collection of personal essays. The student should refer to "Farewell, My Lovely" (p. 192), of which he was part-author, and also to Clifton Fadiman's study of E. B. White (p. 116).

I PAINT WHAT I SEE

A Ballad of Artistic Integrity

"What do you paint, when you paint a wall?"

Said John D.'s grandson Nelson.

"Do you paint just anything there at all?"

"Will there be any doves, or a tree in fall?"

"Or a hunting scene, like an English hall?"

"I paint what I see," said Rivera.

"What are the colors you use when you paint?"

Said John D.'s grandson Nelson.

"Do you use any red in the beard of a saint?"

"If you do, is it terribly red, or faint?"

"Do you use any blue? Is it Prussian?"

"I paint what I paint," said Rivera.

"Whose is that head that I see on my wall?"

Said John D.'s grandson Nelson.

"Is it anyone's head whom we know, at all?"

"A Rensselaer, or a Saltonstall?"

"Is it Franklin D.? Is it Mordaunt Hall?"

"Or is it the head of a Russian?"

"I paint what I think," said Rivera.

"I paint what I paint, I paint what I see,

"I paint what I think," said Rivera,

"And the thing that is dearest in life to me

"In a bourgeois hall is Integrity;

"However . . .

"I'll take out a couple of people drinkin'

"And put in a picture of Abraham Lincoln,

"I could even give you McCormick's reaper

"And still not make my art much cheaper.

"But the head of Lenin has got to stay

"Or my friends will give me the bird today

"The bird, the bird, forever."

"I Paint What I See," from *The Fox of Peapack and Other Poems* by E. B. White. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Harper & Brothers.

"It's not good taste in a man like me,"
 Said John D.'s grandson Nelson,
 "To question an artist's integrity
 "Or mention a practical thing like a fee,
 "But I know what I like to a large degree
 "Though art I hate to hamper;
 "For twenty-one thousand conservative bucks
 "You painted a radical. I say shucks,
 "I never could rent the offices—
 "The capitalistic offices.
 "For this, as you know, is a public hall
 "And people want doves, or a tree in fall,
 "And though your art I dislike to hamper,
 "I owe a *little* to God and Gramper,
 "And after all,
 "It's *my* wall . . ."

"We'll see if it is," said Rivera.

Narrative Poems II

T. S. ELIOT *In poems like The Waste Land (1922) and The Hollow Men (1925), T. S. Eliot (b. 1888) spoke dramatically for the whole disillusioned post-war generation of the nineteen-twenties, and by these poems he will probably continue to be known. In the last twenty years, however, he has grown in stature as a scholar and as a critic of Dante, Dryden, and the Elizabethans, as well as of his contemporaries.*

THE HOLLOW MEN

A Penny for the Old Guy

I

We are the hollow men
 We are the stuffed men
 Leaning together
 Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
 Our dried voices, when

We whisper together
 Are quiet and meaningless
 As wind in dry grass
 Or rats' feet over broken glass
 In our dry cellar

Shape without form, shade without colour,
 Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

Those who have crossed
 With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom

"The Hollow Men," from *Collected Poems of T. S. Eliot*. Copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Remember us—if at all—not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men.

II

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream kingdom
These do not appear:
There, the eyes are
Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing
More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star.

Let me be no nearer
In death's dream kingdom
Let me also wear
Such deliberate disguises
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
In a field
Behaving as the wind behaves
No nearer—

Not that final meeting
In the twilight kingdom

III

This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Is it like this
In death's other kingdom
Waking alone
At the hour when we are
Trembling with tenderness
Lips that would kiss
Form prayers to broken stone.

IV

The eyes are not here
There are no eyes here
In this valley of dying stars
In this hollow valley
This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

In this last of meeting places
We grope together
And avoid speech
Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless
The eyes reappear
As the perpetual star
Multifoliate rose
Of death's twilight kingdom
The hope only
Of empty men.

V

*Here we go round the prickly pear
Prickly pear prickly pear
Here we go round the prickly pear
At five o'clock in the morning.*

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the Shadow

Life is very long

Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

For Thine is
Life is
For Thine is the

*This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper.*

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH *In the nineteen-twenties Archibald MacLeish (b. 1892) lived much in France and was one of the voices of post-war disillusionment. In the nineteen-thirties he was one of the many writers who turned to social and economic themes. In the nineteen-forties he has become more and more frank propagandist and politician and less poet. He has served as Librarian of Congress, Director of the Office of Facts and Figures, and an official of the Department of State. He received the Pulitzer Prize in 1933 for his long narrative poem about Cortez's conquest of Mexico, Conquistador. Since 1937 he has been interested in the writing of radio scripts like The Fall of the City (1937), Air Raid (1938), and The American Story (1944).*

MEMORIAL RAIN

Ambassador Puser the ambassador
Reminds himself in French, felicitous tongue,
What these (young men no longer) lie here for
In rows that once, and somewhere else, were young—

All night in Brussels the wind had tugged at my door:
I had heard the wind at my door and the trees strung
Taut, and to me who had never been before
In that country it was a strange wind blowing
Steadily, stiffening the walls, the floor,
The roof of my room. I had not slept for knowing
He too, dead, was a stranger in that land
And felt beneath the earth in the wind's flowing
A tightening of roots and would not understand,
Remembering lake winds in Illinois,
That strange wind. I had felt his bones in the sand
Listening.

—Reflects that these enjoy
Their country's gratitude, that deep repose,
That peace no pain can break, no hurt destroy,
That rest, that sleep—

At Ghent the wind rose.
There was a smell of rain and a heavy drag

"Memorial Rain," from *Poems, 1924-1933*. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

Of wind in the hedges but not as the wind blows
 Over fresh water when the waves lag
 Foaming and the willows huddle and it will rain:
 I felt him waiting.

—Indicates the flag
 Which (may he say) enisles in Flanders' plain
 This little field these happy, happy dead
 Have made America—

In the ripe grain
 The wind coiled glistening, darted, fled,
 Dragging its heavy body: at Waereghem
 The wind coiled in the grass above his head:
 Waiting—listening—

—Dedicates to them
 This earth their bones have hallowed, this last gift
 A grateful country—

Under the dry grass stem
 The words are blurred, are thickened, the words sift
 Confused by the rasp of the wind, by the thin grating
 Of ants under the grass, the minute shift
 And tumble of dusty sand separating
 From dusty sand. The roots of the grass strain,
 Tighten, the earth is rigid, waits—he is waiting—

And suddenly, and all at once, the rain!

The people scatter, they run into houses, the wind
 Is trampled under the rain, shakes free, is again
 Trampled. The rain gathers, running in thinned
 spurts of water that ravel in the dry sand
 Seeping into the sand under the grass roots, seeping
 Between cracked boards to the bones of a clenched hand:
 The earth relaxes, loosens; he is sleeping,
 He rests, he is quiet, he sleeps in a strange land.

AMY LOWELL *One of the principal experimenters in American poetry of the second and third decades of the century, Amy Lowell (1874-1925) wrote in a great variety of verse forms, including free verse and "polyphonic prose." She was also a notable controversialist and interpretive critic, her subjects including Imagism (a school of poetry to which she belonged), Keats,*

and Stravinsky. "Patterns" contains not only the bright images and physical sensations for which she always strove, but more dramatic passion than she usually employs in such volumes as *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* (1914) and *Men, Women and Ghosts* (1916).

PATTERNS

I walk down the garden-paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden-paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
With my powdered hair and jewelled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden-paths.

My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about me,
Only whale-bone and brocade.
And I sink on a seat in the shade
Of a lime-tree. For my passion
Wars against the stiff brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze
As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime-tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.

And the plashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain
Comes down the garden-paths.
The dripping never stops.
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick, she cannot see her lover hiding,
But she guesses he is near,

"Patterns," from *Selected Poems*. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her.

What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon the ground.
All the pink and silver crumpled up on the ground.

I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter.
I should see the sun flashing from his sword-hilt and the
buckles on his shoes.

I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-booted lover.
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body as he
clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.
With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon—
I am very like to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun sifts through the shade.

Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom,
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the Duke.
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday se'nnight."
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman.
"No," I told him.
"See that the messenger takes some refreshment."
"No, no answer."
And I walked into the garden,
Up and down the patterned paths,
In my stiff, correct brocade.
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly in the sun,
Each one.
I stood upright too,
Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown;
Up and down I walked,
Up and down.

In a month he would have been my husband.
In a month, here, underneath this lime,

We would have broke the pattern;
 He for me, and I for him,
 He as Colonel, I as Lady,
 On this shady seat.
 He had a whim
 That sunlight carried blessing.
 And I answered, "It shall be as you have said."
 Now he is dead.

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
 Up and down
 The patterned garden-paths
 In my stiff, brocaded gown.
 The squills and daffodils
 Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow.
 I shall go
 Up and down
 In my gown.
 Gorgeously arrayed,
 Boned and stayed.
 And the softness of my body will be guarded from embrace
 By each button, hook, and lace.
 For the man who should loose me is dead,
 Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
 In a pattern called a war.
 Christ! What are patterns for?

VACHEL LINDSAY (1879-1931) lectured, preached, sang, and wrote poetry to his countrymen for a quarter of a century in a single-minded effort to communicate to them his "gospel of beauty" and his sense of the basic rhythms of American life so forcibly expressed in his poems. In particular, he took several long tramps through various states, preaching and declaiming to the people his gospel and his poems. His experiences not only are described in his two prose volumes, *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty* (1914) and *A Handy Guide for Beggars* (1916), but also resulted in his most familiar books, *General William Booth Enters into Heaven and Other Poems* (1913) and *The Congo and Other Poems* (1914).

THE GHOSTS OF THE BUFFALOES

Last night at black midnight I woke with a cry,
 The windows were shaking, there was thunder on high,
 The floor was atremble, the door was ajar,

"The Ghosts of the Buffaloes" and "A Negro Sermon:—Simon Legree," from *Selected Poems* by Vachel Lindsay. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

White fires, crimson fires, shone from afar.
 I rushed to the dooryard. The city was gone.
 My home was a hut without orchard or lawn.
 It was mud-smear and logs near a whispering stream,
 Nothing else built by man could I see in my dream . . .

Then . . .

Ghost-kings came headlong, row upon row,
 Gods of the Indians, torches aglow.
 They mounted the bear and the elk and the deer,
 And eagles gigantic, agèd and sere,
 They rode long-horn cattle, they cried "A-la-la."
 They lifted the knife, the bow, and the spear,
 They lifted ghost-torches from dead fires below,
 The midnight made grand with the cry "A-la-la."
 The midnight made grand with a red-god charge,
 A red-god show,
 A red-god show,
 "A-la-la, a-la-la, a-la-la, a-la-la."

With bodies like bronze, and terrible eyes
 Came the rank and the file, with catamount cries,
 Gibbering, yipping, with hollow-skull clacks,
 Riding white bronchos with skeleton backs,
 Scalp-hunters, beaded and spangled and bad,
 Naked and lustful and foaming and mad,
 Flashing primeval demoniac scorn,
 Blood-thirst and pomp amid darkness reborn,
 Power and glory that sleep in the grass
 While the winds and the snows and the great rains pass.
 They crossed the gray river, thousands abreast,
 They rode out in infinite lines to the west,
 Tide upon tide of strange fury and foam,
 Spirits and wraiths, the blue was their home,
 The sky was their goal where the star-flags are furled,
 And on past those far golden splendors they whirled.
 They burned to dim meteors, lost in the deep,
 And I turned in dazed wonder, thinking of sleep.

And the wind crept by
 Alone, unkempt, unsatisfied,
 The wind cried and cried—
 Muttered of massacres long past,
 Buffaloes in shambles vast . . .
 An owl said, "Hark, what is a-wing?"
 I heard a cricket caroling,
 I heard a cricket caroling,
 I heard a cricket caroling.

Then . . .

Snuffing the lightning that crashed from on high
Rose royal old buffaloes, row upon row.
The lords of the prairie came galloping by.
And I cried in my heart "A-la-la, a-la-la.
A red-god show,
A red-god show,
A-la-la, a-la-la, a-la-la."
Buffaloes, buffaloes, thousands abreast,
A scourge and amazement, they swept to the west.
With black bobbing noses, with red rolling tongues,
Coughing forth steam from their leather-wrapped lungs,
Cows with their calves, bulls big and vain,
Goring the laggards, shaking the mane,
Stamping flint feet, flashing moon eyes,
Pompous and owlish, shaggy and wise.

Like sea-cliffs and caves resounded their ranks
With shoulders like waves, and undulant flanks.
Tide upon tide of strange fury and foam,
Spirits and wraiths, the blue was their home,
The sky was their goal where the star-flags are furled,
And on past those far golden splendors they whirled.
They burned to dim meteors, lost in the deep,
And I turned in dazed wonder, thinking of sleep.

I heard a cricket's cymbals play,
A scarecrow lightly flapped his rags,
And a pan that hung by his shoulder rang,
Rattled and thumped in a listless way,
And now the wind in the chimney sang,
The wind in the chimney,
The wind in the chimney,
The wind in the chimney,
Seemed to say:—
"Dream, boy, dream,
If you anywise can.
To dream is the work
Of beast or man.
Life is the west-going dream-storm's breath,
Life is a dream, the sigh of the skies,
The breath of the stars, that nod on their pillows
With their golden hair mussed over their eyes."
The locust played on his musical wing,
Sang to his mate of love's delight.
I heard the whippoorwill's soft fret.
I heard a cricket caroling,
I heard a cricket caroling,
I heard a cricket say: "Good-night, good-night,
Good-night, good-night, . . . good-night."

A NEGRO SERMON:—SIMON LEGREE

Legree's big house was white and green.
His cotton-fields were the best to be seen.
He had strong horses and opulent cattle,
And bloodhounds bold, with chains that
would rattle.

His garret was full of curious things:
Books of magic, bags of gold,
And rabbits' feet on long twine strings.
But he went down to the Devil.

Legree, he sported a brass-buttoned coat,
A snake-skin necktie, a blood-red shirt.
Legree, he had a beard like a goat,
And a thick hairy neck, and eyes like dirt.
His puffed-out cheeks were fish-belly white,
He had great long teeth, and an appetite.
He ate raw meat, 'most every meal,
And rolled his eyes till the cat would squeal.
His fist was an enormous size
To mash poor niggers that told him lies:
He was surely a witch-man in disguise.
But he went down to the Devil.

He wore hip-boots, and would wade all day
To capture his slaves that had fled away.
But he went down to the Devil.
He beat poor Uncle Tom to death
Who prayed for Legree with his last breath.
Then Uncle Tom to Eva flew,
To the high sanctoriums bright and new;
And Simon Legree stared up beneath,
And cracked his heels, and ground his teeth:
And went down to the Devil.

He crossed the yard in the storm and gloom;
He went into his grand front room.

He said, "I killed him, and I don't care."
He kicked a hound, he gave a swear;
He tightened his belt, he took a lamp,
Went down cellar to the webs and damp.
There in the middle of the mouldy floor
He heaved up a slab; he found a door—
And went down to the Devil.

His lamp blew out, but his eyes burned
bright.

Simon Legree stepped down all night—
Down, down to the Devil.

Simon Legree he reached the place,
He saw one half of the human race,
He saw the Devil on a wide green throne,
Gnawing the meat from a big ham-bone,
And he said to Mister Devil:

"I see that you have much to eat—
A red ham-bone is surely sweet.
I see that you have lion's feet;
I see your frame is fat and fine,
I see you drink your poison wine—
Blood and burning turpentine."

And the Devil said to Simon Legree:

"I like your style, so wicked and free.
Come sit and share my throne with me,
And let us bark and revel."
And there they sit and gnash their teeth,
And each one wears a hop-vine wreath.
They are matching pennies and shooting
craps,
They are playing poker and taking naps.
And old Legree is fat and fine:
He eats the fire, he drinks the wine—
Blood and burning turpentine—
Down, down with the Devil;
Down, down with the Devil;
Down, down with the Devil.

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON (1871-1938) *had a varied career as a member of the Florida bar, a writer for the light opera and grand opera stages, United States Consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua, Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Professor of Creative Literature at Fisk University. Nevertheless, he found time to publish numerous books which interpret the life of the American Negro. In addition to editing anthologies of spirituals (from which the spirituals in this book are taken) and poetry, he wrote The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man (1912), a novel, Black Manhattan (1930), Along this Way (1933), his autobiography, God's Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse (1927), including "The Creation," and Saint Peter Relates an Incident of the Resurrection Day (published 1935), a satirical poem attacking racial discrimination.*

THE CREATION

And God stepped out on space,
And He looked around and said,
"I'm lonely—
I'll make me a world."

And far as the eye of God could see
Darkness covered everything,
Blacker than a hundred midnights
Down in a cypress swamp.

Then God smiled,
And the light broke,
And the darkness rolled up on one side,
And the light stood shining on the other,
And God said, "That's good!"

Then God reached out and took the light in
His hands,
And God rolled the light around in His
hands,
Until He made the sun;
And He set that sun a-blazing in the heavens.
And the light that was left from making the
sun

God gathered up in a shining ball
And flung against the darkness,

Spangling the night with the moon and stars.
Then down between
The darkness and the light
He hurled the world;
And God said, "That's good!"

Then God himself stepped down—
And the sun was on His right hand,
And the moon was on His left;
The stars were clustered about His head,
And the earth was under His feet.
And God walked, and where He trod
His footsteps hollowed the valleys out
And bulged the mountains up.

Then He stopped and looked and saw
That the earth was hot and barren.
So God stepped over to the edge of the world
And He spat out the seven seas;
He batted His eyes, and the lightnings
flashed;
He clapped His hands, and the thunders
rolled;
And the waters above the earth came down,
The cooling waters came down.

Then the green grass sprouted,
And the little red flowers blossomed,

"The Creation," from *God's Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse* by James Weldon Johnson. Copyright, 1927, by The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

The pine-tree pointed his finger to the sky,
 And the oak spread out his arms;
 The lakes cuddled down in the hollows of
 the ground,
 And the rivers ran down to the sea;
 And God smiled again,
 And the rainbow appeared,
 And curled itself around His shoulder.

Then God raised His arm and He waved
 His hand
 Over the sea and over the land,
 And He said, "*Bring forth! Bring forth!*"
 And quicker than God could drop His hand,
 Fishes and fowls
 And beasts and birds
 Swam the rivers and the seas,
 Roamed the forests and the woods,
 And split the air with their wings,
 And God said, "*That's good!*"

Then God walked around
 And God looked around
 On all that He had made.
 He looked at His sun,
 And He looked at His moon,
 And He looked at His little stars;
 He looked on His world

With all its living things,
 And God said, "*I'm lonely still.*"

Then God sat down
 On the side of a hill where He could think;
 By a deep, wide river He sat down;
 With His head in His hands,
 God thought and thought,
 Till He thought, "*I'll make me a man!*"

Up from the bed of the river
 God scooped the clay;
 And by the bank of the river
 He kneeled Him down;
 And there the great God Almighty,
 Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,
 Who flung the stars to the most far corner
 of the night,
 Who rounded the earth in the middle of His
 hand—

This Great God,
 Like a mammy bending over her baby,
 Kneeled down in the dust
 Toiling over a lump of clay
 Till He shaped it in His own image;
 Then into it He blew the breath of life,
 And man became a living soul.
 Amen. Amen.

EDGAR LEE MASTERS (*b. 1869*) has published many volumes of plays, novels, essays, biographies, and poems. His reputation, however, continues to rest chiefly on *Spoon River Anthology* (1914), a collection of over two hundred autobiographical epitaphs in which the dead inhabitants of a little Mid-Western town tell concisely the truth about their lives. Since the confessions are frequently interrelated, the result is a surprisingly complete representation of the whole town, even more significant and interesting as a whole than excerpts like "*Louise Smith*" and "*John Hancock Otis*" can indicate.

LOUISE SMITH

Herbert broke our engagement of eight years
 When Annabelle returned to the village
 From the Seminary, ah me!

If I had let my love for him alone
 It might have grown into a beautiful
 sorrow—
 Who knows?—filling my life with healing
 fragrance.

"Louise Smith" and "John Hancock Otis," from *Spoon River Anthology*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

But I tortured it, I poisoned it,
 I blinded its eyes, and it became hatred—
 Deadly ivy instead of clematis.
 And my soul fell from its support,
 Its tendrils tangled in decay.
 Do not let the will play gardener to your
 soul
 Unless you are sure
 It is wiser than your soul's nature.

JOHN HANCOCK OTIS

As to democracy, fellow citizens,
 Are you not prepared to admit
 That I, who inherited riches and was to the
 manor born,
 Was second to none in Spoon River

In my devotion to the cause of Liberty?
 While my contemporary, Anthony Findlay,
 Born in a shanty and beginning life
 As a water carrier to the section hands,
 Then becoming a section hand when he was
 grown,
 Afterwards foreman of the gang, until he
 rose
 To the superintendency of the railroad,
 Living in Chicago,
 Was a veritable slave driver,
 Grinding the faces of labor,
 And a bitter enemy of democracy.
 And I say to you, Spoon River,
 And to you, O republic,
 Beware of the man who rises to power
 From one suspender.

RUDYARD KIPLING¹

THE "MARY GLOSTER"

I've paid for your sickest fancies; I've humoured your crackedest whim—
 Dick, it's your daddy, dying; you've got to listen to him!
 Good for a fortnight, am I? The doctor told you? He lied.
 I shall go under by morning, and— Put that nurse outside.
 'Never seen death yet, Dickie? Well, now is your time to learn,
 And you'll wish you held my record before it comes to your turn.
 Not counting the Line and the Foundry, the Yards and the village, too,
 I've made myself and a million; but I'm damned if I made you.
 Master at two-and-twenty, and married at twenty-three—
 Ten thousand men on the pay-roll, and forty freighters at sea!
 Fifty years between 'em, and every year of it fight,
 And now I'm Sir Anthony Gloster, dying, a baronite:
 For I lunched with his Royal 'Ighness—what was it the papers had?
 "Not least of our merchant-princes." Dickie, that's me, your dad!
 I didn't begin with askings. I took my job and I stuck;
 I took the chances they wouldn't, an' now they're calling it luck.
 Lord, what boats I've handled—rotten and leaky and old!
 Ran 'em, or—opened the bilge-cock, precisely as I was told.
 Grub that 'ud bind you crazy, and crews that 'ud turn you grey,
 And a big fat lump of insurance to cover the risk on the way.

"The 'Mary Gloster,'" from *The Seven Seas*, by Rudyard Kipling, copyright, 1896, by Rudyard Kipling, reprinted by permission of Mrs. Bambridge and Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

¹ See p. 1013 for biographical sketch of Rudyard Kipling.

The others they dursn't do it; they said they valued their life
 (They've served me since as skippers). *I* went, and *I* took my wife.
 Over the world *I* drove 'em, married at twenty-three,
 And your mother saving the money and making a man of me.
I was content to be master, but she said there was better behind;
 She took the chances *I* wouldn't, and *I* followed your mother blind.
 She egged me to borrow the money, an' she helped me to clear the loan,
 When we bought half-shares in a cheap 'un and hoisted a flag of our own.
 Patching and coaling on credit, and living the Lord knew how,
 We started the Red Ox freighters—we've eight-and-thirty now.
 And those were the days of clippers, and the freights were clipper-freights,
 And we knew we were making our fortune, but she died in Macassar Straits—
 By the Little Paternosters, as you come to the Union Bank—
 And we dropped her in fourteen fathom; *I* pricked it off where she sank.
 Owners we were, full owners, and the boat was christened for her,
 And she died in the *Mary Gloster*. My heart, how young we were!
 So *I* went on a spree round Java and well-nigh ran her ashore,
 But your mother came and warned me and *I* wouldn't liquor no more:
 Strict *I* stuck to my business, afraid to stop or *I*'d think,
 Saving the money (she warned me), and letting the other men drink.
 And *I* met M'Cullough in London (*I*'d saved five 'undred then),
 And 'tween us we started the Foundry—three forges and twenty men:
 Cheap repairs for the cheap 'uns. It paid, and the business grew,
 For *I* bought me a steam-lathe patent, and that was a gold mine too.
 "Cheaper to build 'em than buy 'em," *I* said, but M'Cullough he shied,
 And we wasted a year in talking before we moved to the Clyde.
 And the Lines were all beginning, and we all of us started fair,
 Building our engines like houses and staying the boilers square.
 But M'Cullough 'e wanted cabins with marble and maple and all,
 And Brussels an' Utrecht velvet, and baths and a Social Hall,
 And pipes for closets all over, and cutting the frames too light,
 But M'Cullough he died in the Sixties, and— Well, *I*'m dying tonight. . . .
I knew—*I* knew what was coming, when we bid on the *Byfleet's* keel—
 They piddled and piffled with iron. *I*'d given my orders for steel!
 Steel and the first expansions. It paid, *I* tell you, it paid,
 When we came with our nine-knot freighters and collared the long-run trade!
 And they asked me how *I* did it, and *I* gave 'em the Scripture text,
 "You keep your light so shining a little in front o' the next!"
 They copied all they could follow, but they couldn't copy my mind,
 And *I* left 'em sweating and stealing a year and a half behind.
 Then came the armour-contracts, but that was M'Cullough's side;
 He was always best in the Foundry, but better, perhaps, he died.
I went through his private papers; the notes was plainer than print;
 And *I*'m no fool to finish if a man'll give me a hint.
 (*I* remember his widow was angry.) So *I* saw what his drawings meant,
 And *I* started the six-inch rollers, and it paid me sixty per cent.
 Sixty per cent *with* failures, and more than twice we could do,
 And a quarter-million to credit, and *I* saved it all for you!
I thought—it doesn't matter—you seemed to favour your ma,
 But you're nearer forty than thirty, and *I* know the kind you are.

Harrer an' Trinity College! I ought to ha' sent you to sea—
 But I stood you an education, an' what have you done for me?
 The things I knew was proper you wouldn't thank me to give,
 And the things I knew was rotten you said was the way to live.
 For you muddled with books and pictures, an' china an' etchin's an' fans,
 And your rooms at college was beastly—more like a whore's than a man's;
 Till you married that thin-flanked woman, as white and as stale as a bone,
 An' she gave you your social nonsense; but where's that kid o' your own?
 I've seen your carriages blocking the half o' the Cromwell Road,
 But never the doctor's brougham to help the missus unload.
 (So there isn't even a grandchild, an' the Gloster family's done.)
 Not like your mother, she isn't. *She* carried her freight each run.
 But they died, the pore little beggars! At sea she had 'em—they died.
 Only you, an' you stood it. You haven't stood much beside.
 Weak, a liar, and idle, and mean as a collier's whelp
 Nosing for scraps in the galley. No help—my son was no help!
 So he gets three 'undred thousand, in trust and the interest paid.
 I wouldn't give it you, Dickie—you see, I made it in trade.
 You're saved from soiling your fingers, and if you have no child,
 It all comes back to the business. 'Gad, won't your wife be wild!
 'Calls and calls in her carriage, her 'andkerchief up to 'er eye:
 "Daddy! dear daddy's dyin'!" and doing her best to cry.
 Grateful? Oh, yes, I'm grateful, but keep her away from here.
 Your mother 'ud never ha' stood 'er, and, anyhow, women are queer. . . .
 There's women will say I've married a second time. Not quite!
 But give pore Aggie a hundred, and tell her your lawyers'll fight.
 She was the best o' the boiling—you'll meet her before it ends.
 I'm in for a row with the mother—I'll leave you settle my friends.
 For a man he must go with a woman, which women don't understand—
 Or the sort that say they can see it they aren't the marrying brand.
 But I wanted to speak o' your mother that's Lady Gloster still;
 I'm going to up and see her, without its hurting the will.
 Here! Take your hand off the bell-pull. Five thousand's waiting for you,
 If you'll only listen a minute, and do as I bid you do.
 They'll try to prove me crazy, and, if you bungle, they can;
 And I've only you to trust to! (O God, why ain't it a man?)
 There's some waste money on marbles, the same as M'Cullough tried—
 Marbles and mausoleums—but I call that sinful pride.
 There's some ship bodies for burial—we've carried 'em, soldered and packed;
 Down in their wills they wrote it, and nobody called *them* cracked.
 But me—I've too much money, and people might . . . All my fault:
 It come o' hoping for grandsons and buying that Wokin' vault. . . .
 I'm sick o' the 'ole dam' business. I'm going back where I came.
 Dick, you're the son o' my body, and you'll take charge o' the same!
 I want to lie by your mother, ten thousand mile away,
 And they'll want to send me to Woking; and that's where you'll earn your pay.
 I've thought it out on the quiet, the same as it ought to be done—
 Quiet, and decent, and proper—an' here's your orders, my son.
 You know the Line? You don't, though. You write to the Board, and tell
 Your father's death has upset you an' you're goin' to cruise for a spell,

An' you'd like the *Mary Gloster*—I've held her ready for this—
 They'll put her in working order and you'll take her out as she is.
 Yes, it was money idle when I patched her and laid her aside
 (Thank God, I can pay for my fancies!)—the boat where your mother died,
 By the Little Paternosters, as you come to the Union Bank,
 We dropped her—I think I told you—and I pricked it off where she sank.
 ['Tiny she looked on the grating—that oily, treacly sea—]
 'Hundred and Eighteen East, remember, and South just Three.
 Easy bearings to carry—Three South—Three to the dot;
 But I gave McAndrew a copy in case of dying—or not.
 And so you'll write to McAndrew, he's Chief of the Maori Line;
 They'll give him leave, if you ask 'em and say it's business o' mine.
 I built three boats for the Maoris, an' very well pleased they were,
 An' I've known Mac since the Fifties, and Mac knew me—and her.
 After the first stroke warned me I sent him the money to keep
 Against the time you'd claim it, committin' your dad to the deep;
 For you are the son o' my body, and Mac was my oldest friend,
 I've never asked 'im to dinner, but he'll see it out to the end.
 Stiff-necked Glasgow beggar! I've heard he's prayed for my soul,
 But he couldn't lie if you paid him, and he'd starve before he stole.
 He'll take the *Mary* in ballast—you'll find her a lively ship;
 And you'll take Sir Anthony Gloster, that goes on 'is wedding-trip,
 Lashed in our old deck-cabin with all three port-holes wide,
 The kick o' the screw beneath him and the round blue seas outside!
 Sir Anthony Gloster's carriage—our 'ouse-flag flyin' free—
 Ten thousand men on the pay-roll and forty freighters at sea!
 He made himself and a million, but this world is a fleetin' show,
 And he'll go to the wife of 'is bosom the same as he ought to go—
 By the heel of the Paternosters—there isn't a chance to mistake—
 And Mac'll pay you the money as soon as the bubbles break!
 Five thousand for six weeks' cruising, the staunchest freighter afloat,
 And Mac he'll give you your bonus the minute I'm out o' the boat!
 He'll take you round to Macassar, and you'll come back alone;
 He knows what I want o' the *Mary*. . . . I'll do what I please with my own.
 Your mother 'ud call it wasteful, but I've seven-and-thirty more;
 I'll come in my private carriage and bid it wait at the door. . . .
 For my son 'e was never a credit: 'e muddled with books and art,
 And 'e lived on Sir Anthony's money and 'e broke Sir Anthony's heart.
 There isn't even a grandchild, and the Gloster family's done—
 The only one you left me, O mother, the only one!
 Harrer and Trinity College—me slavin' early an' late—
 An' he thinks I'm dying crazy, and you're in Macassar Strait!
 Flesh o' my flesh, my dearie, for ever an' ever amen,
 That first stroke come for a warning. I ought to ha' gone to you then,
 But—cheap repairs for a cheap 'un—the doctors said I'd do.
 Mary, why didn't *you* warn me? I've allus heeded to you,
 Excep'—I know—about women; but you are a spirit now;
 An', wife, they was only women, and I was a man. That's how.
 An' a man 'e must go with a woman, as you *could* not understand;
 But I never talked 'em secrets. I paid 'em out o' hand.

Thank Gawd, I can pay for my fancies! Now what's five thousand to me,
 For a berth off the Paternosters in the haven where I would be?
 I believe in the Resurrection, if I read my Bible plain,
 But I wouldn't trust 'em at Wokin'; we're safer at sea again.
 For the heart it shall go with the treasure—go down to the sea in ships.
 I'm sick of the hired women. I'll kiss my girl on her lips!
 I'll be content with my fountain. I'll drink from my own well,
 And the wife of my youth shall charm me—an' the rest can go to Hell!
 (Dickie, *he* will, that's certain.) I'll lie in our standin'-bed,
 An' Mac'll take her in ballast—an' she trims best by the head. . . .
 Down by the head an' sinkin', her fires are drawn and cold,
 And the water's splashin' hollow on the skin of the empty hold—
 Churning an' choking and chuckling, quiet and scummy and dark—
 Full to her lower hatches and risin' steady. Hark!
 That was the after-bulkhead. . . . She's flooded from stem to stern. . . .
 'Never seen death yet, Dickie? . . . Well, now is your time to learn!

ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889) *was primarily and profoundly interested in the psychological states of men and women, both historical and contemporary. The relation between men's deeds and their motives, intentions, and ideals fascinated him. His most successful and typical poems are monologues in which his characters reveal their acts and their souls with remarkable subtlety and clarity. Sometimes they reveal too the whole spirit of an historical epoch, as in Fra Lippo Lippi, A Grammarian's Funeral, and The Bishop Orders His Tomb.*

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

Rome, 15—

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity!
 Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping
 back?
 Nephews—sons mine . . . ah God, I know
 not! Well—
 She, men would have to be your mother
 once,
 Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!
 What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
 Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,
 And as she died so must we die ourselves,
 And thence ye may perceive the world's a
 dream.
 Life, how and what is it? As here I lie
 In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,

Hours and long hours in the dead night, I
 ask
 "Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace seems
 all.
 Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;
 And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought
 With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye
 know:
 —Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my care;
 Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner
 South
 He graced his carrion with, God curse the
 same!
 Yet still my niche is not so cramped but
 thence
 One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,
 And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
 And up into the aery dome where live
 The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk:

And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
 And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
 With those nine columns round me, two and
 two,
 The odd one at my feet where Anselm
 stands:
 Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
 As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse.
 —Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,
 Put me where I may look at him! True
 peach,
 Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!
 Draw close: that conflagration of my church
 —What then? So much was saved if aught
 were missed!
 My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
 The white-grape vineyard where the oil-
 press stood,
 Drop water gently till the surface sink,
 And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not,
 I! . . .
 Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,
 And corded up in a tight olive-frail,
 Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,
 Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
 Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast . . .
 Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,
 That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
 So, let the blue lump poise between my
 knees,
 Like God the Father's globe on both his
 hands
 Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
 For Gandolf shall not choose but see and
 burst!
 Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:
 Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
 Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—
 'Twas ever antique-black I meant! How else
 Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?
 The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,
 Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and
 perchance
 Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
 The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,
 Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan
 Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment
 off,
 And Moses with the tables . . . but I know

Ye mark me not! What do they whisper
 thee,
 Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
 To revel down my villas while I gasp
 Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine
 Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles
 at!
 Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!
 'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve.
 My bath must needs be left behind, alas!
 One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,
 There's plenty jasper somewhere in the
 world—
 And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
 Horses for ye, and brown Greek manu-
 scripts,
 And mistresses with great smooth marbly
 limbs?
 —That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
 Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every
 word,
 No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—
 Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his need!
 And then how I shall lie through centuries,
 And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
 And see God made and eaten all day long,
 And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste
 Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!
 For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,
 Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
 I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
 And stretched my feet forth straight as stone
 can point,
 And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
 Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:
 And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange
 thoughts
 Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
 About the life before I lived this life,
 And this life too, popes, cardinals and
 priests,
 Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,
 Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,
 And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,
 And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,
 —Aha, *ELUCESCEBAT* quoth our friend?
 No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!
 Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.
 All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
 My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?

Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,
 They glitter like your mother's for my soul,
 Or ye would heighten my impoverished
 frieze,
 Piece out its starved design, and fill my
 vase
 With grapes, and add a vizor and a Term,
 And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx
 That in his struggle throws the thyrsus
 down,
 To comfort me on my entablature
 Whereon I am to lie till I must ask
 "Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me,
 there!
 For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude

To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it!
 Stone—
 Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares which
 sweat
 As if the corpse they keep were oozing
 through—
 And no more *lapis* to delight the world!
 Well go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,
 But in a row: and, going, turn your backs
 —Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,
 And leave me in my church, the church for
 peace,
 That I may watch at leisure if he lee
 Old Gandolf, at me, from his onir *—rs—*
 As still he envied me, so fair *ed on-stone,*
do she was!

Lyric Poems

ROBERT FROST (b. 1875) believes that a poem "*begins in delight and ends in wisdom*"—a belief aptly illustrated by his own work. His lyrics usually begin with some common but ever delightful circumstance of the revolving seasons, his narratives with a commonplace but dramatic event in the life of rural New Englanders; most of them end in a wisdom which is shrewd, contemplative, humane—never metaphysical. All his poems, lyrical and narrative, early and late, are even and harmonious in tone and quality, though perhaps the earlier poems which appeared in *North of Boston* (1914), *Mountain Interval* (1916), *New Hampshire* (1923), and *West-Running Brook* (1928) remain the best liked. *h*

NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY

Nature's first green is gold,
 Her hardest hue to hold.
 Her early leaf's a flower;
 But only so an hour.
 Then leaf subsides to leaf.
 So Eden sank to grief,
 So dawn goes down to day.
 Nothing gold can stay.

BLUE-BUTTERFLY DAY

It is blue-butterfly day here in spring,
 And with these sky-flakes down in flurry on
 flurry
 There is more unmixed color on the wing
 Than flowers will show for days unless they
 hurry.
 But these are flowers that fly and all but
 sing:

These eight poems by Robert Frost are from his *Collected Poems*. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

And now from having ridden out desire
They lie closed over in the wind and cling
Where wheels have freshly sliced the April
mire.

HYLA BROOK

By June our brook's run out of song and
speed.
Sought for much after that, it will be found
Eit^{er} to have gone groping underground
(And taken with it all the Hyla breed
That shout^{ed} in the mist a month ago,
Like ghost o^{ur} sleigh-bells in a ghost of
snow)—
Or flourished and come up in jewel-weed,
Weak foliage that is blown upon and bent
Even against the way its waters went.
Its bed is left a faded paper sheet
Of dead leaves stuck together by the heat—
A brook to none but who remember ^{it} ~~it~~.
This as it will be seen is other far
Than with brooks taken elsewhere in
song.
We love the things we love for what they
are.

THE OVEN BIRD

There is a singer everyone has heard,
Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,
Who makes the solid tree trunks sound
again.
He says that leaves are old and that for
flowers
Mid-summer is to spring as one to ten.
He says the early petal-fall is past
When pear and cherry bloom went down in
showers
On sunny days a moment overcast;
And comes that other fall we name the
fall.
He says the highway dust is over all.
The bird would cease and be as other birds
But that he knows in singing not to sing.
The question that he frames in all but words
Is what to make of a diminished thing.

THE WOOD-PILE

Out walking in the frozen swamp one gray
day
I paused and said, "I will turn back from
here.
No, I will go on farther—and we shall see."
The hard snow held me, save where now
and then
One foot went through. The view was all in
lines
Straight up and down of tall slim trees
Too much alike to mark or name a place by
So as to say for certain I was here
Or somewhere else: I was just far from
home.
A small bird flew before me. He was careful
To put a tree between us when he lighted,
And say no word to tell me who he was
Who was so foolish as to think what *he*
thought.
He thought that I was after him for a
feather—
The white one in his tail; like one who takes
Anything said as personal to himself.
One slight out sideways would have unde-
ceived him.
And then there was a pile of wood for which
I forgot him here, and let his little fear
Carry him off and away I might have gone,
Without so much if as wishing him good-
night.
He went behind it to make his last stand.
It was a cord of maple, four and split
And piled—and measured of four by four by
eight.
And not another like it could I see.
No runner tracks in this yarning snow looped
near it.
And it was older sure than, ^{ed this} ~~ed this~~ year's cut-
ting,
Or even last year's or the year on the shore.
The wood was gray and the her talk warping
off it
as fresh
And the pile somewhat sunken pure, ^{en. matis} ~~en. matis~~
Had wound strings round ^{our friend} ~~our friend~~ like
a bundle.
What held it though on one pilgrim's side was tree
Still growing, and on one a give the Peake androp,
These latter about to fall. I thought my heart right that

Someone who lived in turning to fresh tasks
 Could so forget his handiwork on which
 He spent himself, the labor of his ax,
 And leave it there far from a useful fireplace
 To warm the frozen swamp as best it could
 With the slow smokeless burning of decay.

GOOD-BYE AND KEEP COLD

This saying good-bye on the verge of the
 dark

And cold to an orchard so young in the
 bark,

Reminds me of all that can happen to harm
 An orchard away at the end of the farm

All winter cut off by a hill from the house.

I don't want it girdled by rabbit and mouse,

I don't want it dreamily nibbled for browse

By deer, and I don't want it budded by

grouse,

(If certain it wouldn't be idle to call,

I'd summon grouse, rabbit and deer to the

wall

And warn them away with a stick for a

gun.)

I don't want it stirred by the heat of the sun.

(We made it secure against being, I hope,

By setting it out on a northerly slope.)

No orchard's the worse for the wintriest

storm,

But one thing about it, it mustn't get warm.

"How often already, I've had to be told

Keep cold, young w^{ard}. Good-bye and

keep cold. th^e the

Dread fifty above, nt the an fifty below."

I have to be gone for a season or so;

My business awhile is with different trees,

Less carefully nurtured, less fruitful than

these

And such as is done to their wood with an
 ax—

Maples and birches and tamaracks.

I wish I could promise to lie in the night

And share in an orchard's arboreal plight,

When slowly (and nobody comes with a

light!)

Its heart sinks lower under the sod;

But something has to be left to God.

THE ONSET

Always the same when on a fated night

At last the gathered snow lets down as white

As may be in dark woods and with a song

It shall not make again all winter long—

Of hissing on the yet uncovered ground,—

I almost stumble looking up and round,

As one who, overtaken by the end,

Gives up his errand and lets death descend

Upon him where he is, with nothing done

To evil, no important triumph won

More than if life had never been begun.

Yet all the precedent is on my side:

I know that winter death has never tried

The earth but it has failed; the snow may

heap

In long storms an undrifted four feet deep

As measured against maple, birch and oak;

It cannot check the Peeper's silver croak;

And I shall see the snow all go down hill

In water of a slender April rill

That flashes tail through last year's withered

brake

And dead weeds like a disappearing snake.

Nothing will be left white but here a birch

And there a clump of houses with a church.

BIRCHES

When I see birches bend to left and right

Across the lines of straighter darker trees,

I like to think some boy's been swinging them.

But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.

Ice-storms do that. Often you must have seen them

Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning

After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.
But I was going to say when Truth broke in
With all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm
(Now am I free to be poetical?)
I should prefer to have some boy bend them
As he went out and in to fetch the cows—
Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
Whose only play was what he found himself,
Summer or winter, and could play alone.
One by one he subdued his father's trees
By riding them down over and over again
Until he took the stiffness out of them,
And not one but hung limp, not one was left
For him to conquer. He learned all there was
To learn about not launching out too soon
And so not carrying the tree away
Clear to the ground. He always kept his poise
To the top branches, climbing carefully
With the same pains you use to fill a cup
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish, like
Kicking his way down through the air to the ground.
So was I once myself a swinger of birches.
And so I dream of going back to be.
It's when I'm weary of considerations,
And life is too much like a pathless wood
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
From a twig's having lashed across it open.
I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over.
May no fate willfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:
I don't know where it's likely to go better.
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk

Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,
 But dipped its top and set me down again.
 That would be good both going and coming back.
 One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.

EMILY DICKINSON (1830-1886) *for many years led the life of a recluse in the family home at Amherst, Massachusetts, observing and meditating the ways of birds, bees, clouds, seasons, men and women, God and his universe. Her quick, concentrated flashes of insight into these ways she loved to send forth from her chamber in brief poems which often accompanied little gifts and letters to her cherished friends. Few of her poems were printed in her lifetime; they have been published gradually since her death.*

A LADY RED UPON THE HILL

A lady red upon the hill
 Her annual secret keeps;
 A lady white within the field
 In placid lily sleeps!

The tidy breezes with their brooms
 Sweep vale, and hill, and tree!
 Prithee, my pretty housewives!
 Who may expected be?

The neighbors do not yet suspect!
 The woods exchange a smile—
 Orchard, and buttercup, and bird—
 In such a little while!

And yet how still the landscape stands,
 How nonchalant the wood,
 As if the resurrection
 Were nothing very odd!

I TASTE A LIQUOR NEVER BREWED

I taste a liquor never brewed,
 From tankards scooped in pearl;

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"The Name of It Is Autumn," from *Bolts of Melody*, edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and Millicent Todd Bingham. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Harper & Brothers.

Not all the vats upon the Rhine
 Yield such an alcohol!

Inebriate of air am I,
 And debauchee of dew,
 Reeling, through endless summer days,
 From inns of molten blue.

When landlords turn the drunken bee
 Out of the foxglove's door,
 When butterflies renounce their drams,
 I shall but drink the more!

Till seraphs swing their snowy hats,
 And saints to windows run,
 To see the little tippler
 Leaning against the sun!

THE NAME OF IT IS AUTUMN

The name of it is autumn,
 The hue of it is blood,
 An artery upon the hill,
 A vein along the road,

Great globules in the alleys,
 And oh, the shower of stain

When winds upset the basin
And spill the scarlet rain!

It sprinkles bonnets far below,
It gathers ruddy pools,
Then eddies like a rose away
Upon vermilion wheels.

THESE ARE THE DAYS WHEN BIRDS COME BACK

These are the days when birds come back,
A very few, a bird or two,
To take a backward look.

These are the days when skies put on
The old, old sophistries of June,—
A blue and gold mistake.

Oh, fraud that cannot cheat the bee,
Almost thy plausibility
Induces my belief,

Till ranks of seeds their witness bear,
And softly through the altered air
Hurries a timid leaf!

Oh, sacrament of summer days,
Oh, last communion in the haze,
Permit a child to join,

Thy sacred emblems to partake,
Thy consecrated bread to break,
Taste thine immortal wine!

THE SKY IS LOW

The sky is low, the clouds are mean,
A travelling flake of snow
Across a barn or through a rut
Debates if it will go.

A narrow wind complains all day
How someone treated him;
Nature, like us, is sometimes caught
Without her diadem.

IT SIFTS FROM LEADEN SIEVES

It sifts from leaden sieves,
It powders all the wood,
It fills with alabaster wool
The wrinkles of the road.

It makes an even face
Of mountain and of plain,—
Unbroken forehead from the east
Unto the east again.

It reaches to the fence,
It wraps it, rail by rail,
Till it is lost in fleeces;
It flings a crystal veil

On stump and stack and stem,—
The summer's empty room,
Acres of seams where harvests were,
Recordless, but for them.

It ruffles wrists of posts,
As ankles of a queen,—
Then stills its artisans like ghosts,
Denying they have been.

ELYSIUM IS AS FAR

Elysium is as far as to
The very nearest room,
If in that room a friend await
Felicity or doom.

What fortitude the soul contains,
That it can so endure
The accent of a coming foot,
The opening of a door.

ONE NEED NOT BE A CHAMBER TO BE HAUNTED

One need not be a chamber to be haunted,
One need not be a house;
The brain has corridors surpassing
Material place.

Far safer, of a midnight meeting
Eternal ghost,
Than an interior confronting
That whiter host.

Far safer through an Abbey gallop,
The stones achase,
Than, moonless, one's own self encounter
In lonesome place.

Ourself, behind ourself concealed,
Should startle most;
Assassin, hid in our apartment,
Be horror's least.

The prudent carries a revolver,
He bolts the door,
O'erlooking a superior spectre
More near.

THE BUSTLE IN A HOUSE

The bustle in a house
The morning after death
Is solemnest of industries
Enacted upon earth,—

The sweeping up the heart,
And putting love away
We shall not want to use again
Until eternity.

I NEVER SAW A MOOR

I never saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;

Yet now I know how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in Heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given.

BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH

Because I could not stop for death,
He kindly stopped for me:
The carriage held but just ourselves
And immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school where children played,
Their lessons scarcely done;
We passed the fields of gazing grain,
We passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling of the ground;
The roof was scarcely visible,
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries; but each
Feels shorter than the day
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

ELINOR WYLIE *The cool, restrained feeling and the precise meter and diction of the lyrics of Elinor Wylie (1885-1928) give them a highly individual quality. Her mannered novels, such as Jennifer Lorn and The Venetian Glass Nephew, may seem less clever and distinguished than they did in the nineteen-twenties, but many of the poems in Nets to Catch the Wind (1921),*

Angels and Earthly Creatures (1929), and her other volumes of verse are permanently moving.

FAIR ANNET'S SONG

One thing comes and another thing goes;
Frosts in November drive away the rose;
Like a blowing ember the windflower blows
And drives away the snows.

It is sad to remember and sorrowful to pray:
Let us laugh and be merry, who have seen
today
The last of the cherry and the first of the
may;
And neither one will stay.

AUGUST

Why should this Negro insolently stride
Down the red noonday on such noiseless
feet?
Piled in his barrow, tawnier than wheat,
Lie heaps of smoldering daisies, somber-
eyed,
Their copper petals shriveled up with pride,
Hot with a superfluity of heat,
Like a great brazier borne along the street
By captive leopards, black and burning pied.
Are there no water-lilies, smooth as cream,
With long stems dripping crystal? Are there
none
Like those white lilies, luminous and cool,
Plucked from some hemlock-darkened north-
ern stream
By fair-haired swimmers, diving where the
sun
Scarce warms the surface of the deepest
pool?

GOLDEN BOUGH

These lovely groves of fountain-trees that
shake
A burning spray against autumnal cool,

These eight poems by Elinor Wylie are reprinted from *The Collected Poems of Elinor Wylie*, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright, 1932, by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Descend again in molten drops to make
The rutted path a river and a pool.

They rise in silence, fall in quietude,
Lie still as looking-glass to every sense;
Only their lion-color in the wood
Roars to miraculous heat and turbulence.

VELVET SHOES

Let us walk in the white snow
In a soundless space;
With footsteps quiet and slow,
At a tranquil pace,
Under veils of white lace.

I shall go shod in silk,
And you in wool,
White as a white cow's milk,
More beautiful
Than the breast of a gull.

We shall walk through the still town
In a windless peace;
We shall step upon white down,
Upon silver fleece,
Upon softer than these.

We shall walk in velvet shoes:
Wherever we go
Silence will fall like dew
On white silence below.
We shall walk in the snow.

WILD PEACHES

I

When the world turns completely upside
down
You say we'll emigrate to the Eastern Shore
Aboard a river-boat from Baltimore;
We'll live among wild peach trees, miles
from town,
You'll wear a coonskin cap, and I a gown

Homespun, dyed butternut's dark gold colour.

Lost, like your lotus-eating ancestor,
We'll swim in milk and honey till we drown.

The winter will be short, the summer long,
The autumn amber-hued, sunny and hot,
Tasting of cider and of scuppernong;
All seasons sweet, but autumn best of all.
The squirrels in their silver fur will fall
Like falling leaves, like fruit, before your shot.

2

The autumn frosts will lie upon the grass
Like bloom on grapes of purple-brown and gold.

The misted early mornings will be cold;
The little puddles will be roofed with glass.
The sun, which burns from copper into brass,
Melts these at noon, and makes the boys unfold

Their knitted mufflers; full as they can hold,
Fat pockets dribble chestnuts as they pass.

Peaches grow wild, and pigs can live in clover;

A barrel of salted herrings lasts a year;
The spring begins before the winter's over.
By February you may find the skins
Of garter snakes and water moccasins
Dwindled and harsh, dead-white and cloudy-clear.

3

When April pours the colours of a shell
Upon the hills, when every little creek
Is shot with silver from the Chesapeake
In shoals new-minted by the ocean swell,
When strawberries go begging, and the sleek
Blue plums lie open to the blackbird's beak,
We shall live well—we shall live very well.

The months between the cherries and the peaches

Are brimming cornucopias which spill
Fruits red and purple, sombre-bloomed and black;

Then, down rich fields and frosty river beaches

We'll trample bright persimmons, while you kill

Bronze partridge, speckled quail, and canvasback.

4

Down to the Puritan marrow of my bones
There's something in this richness that I hate.

I love the look, austere, immaculate,
Of landscapes drawn in pearly monotones.
There's something in my very blood that owns

Bare hills, cold silver on a sky of slate,
A thread of water, churned to milky spate
Streaming through slanted pastures fenced with stones.

I love those skies, thin blue or snowy gray
Those fields sparse-planted, rendering meagre sheaves;

That spring, briefer than apple-blossom's breath,

Summer, so much too beautiful to stay,
Swift autumn, like a bonfire of leaves,
And sleepy winter, like the sleep of death.

THE EAGLE AND THE MOLE

Avoid the reeking herd,
Shun the polluted flock,
Live like that stoic bird,
The eagle of the rock.

The huddled warmth of crowds
Begets and fosters hate;
He keeps, above the clouds,
His cliff inviolate.

When flocks are folded warm,
And herds to shelter run,
He sails above the storm,
He stares into the sun.

If in the eagle's track
Your sinews cannot leap,
Avoid the lathered pack,
Turn from the steaming sheep.

If you would keep your soul
From spotted sight or sound,
Live like the velvet mole;
Go burrow underground.

And there hold intercourse
With roots of trees and stones,
With rivers at their source,
And disembodied bones.

SANCTUARY

This is the bricklayer; hear the thud
Of his heavy load dumped down on stone.
His lustrous bricks are brighter than blood,
His smoking mortar whiter than bone.

Set each sharp-edged, fire-bitten brick
Straight by the plumb-line's shivering length;
Make my marvelous wall so thick
Dead nor living may shake its strength.

Full as a crystal cup with drink
Is my cell with dreams, and quiet, and
cool. . . .

Stop, old man! You must leave a chink;
How can I breathe? *You can't, you fool!*

BELLS IN THE RAIN

Sleep falls, with limpid drops of rain,
Upon the steep cliffs of the town.
Sleep falls; men are at peace again
While the small drops fall softly down.

The bright drops ring like bells of glass
Thinned by the wind, and lightly blown;
Sleep cannot fall on peaceful grass
So softly as it falls on stone.

Peace falls unheeded on the dead
Asleep; they have had deep peace to drink
Upon a live man's bloody head
It falls most tenderly, I think.

A. E. HOUSMAN *A professor of Latin at University College, London, and at Cambridge University and a classical scholar of repute, A. E. Housman (1859-1936) wrote a small amount of lyric poetry, all of high quality. His most famous book is A Shropshire Lad (1896), but several later volumes contain similar poems which also express in pure and simple language his melancholy and cynical but brave, stoical, invigorating philosophy.*

REVEILLE

Wake: the silver dusk returning
Up the beach of darkness brims,
And the ship of sunrise burning
Strands upon the eastern rims.

Wake: the vaulted shadow shatters,
Trampled to the floor it spanned,
And the tent of night in tatters
Straws the sky-pavilioned land.

Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying:
Hear the drums of morning play;

Hark, the empty highways crying,
"Who'll beyond the hills away?"

Towns and countries woo together,
Forelands beacon, belfries call;
Never lad that trod on leather
Lived to feast his heart with all.

Up, lad: thews that lie and cumber
Sunlit pallets never thrive;
Morns abed and daylight slumber
Were not meant for man alive.

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;
Breath's a ware that will not keep.

These nine poems by A. E. Housman are reprinted from *A Shropshire Lad* by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

Up, lad: when the journey's over
There'll be time enough to sleep.

LOVELIEST OF TREES

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride,
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

OH, SEE HOW THICK THE GOLDCUP FLOWERS

Oh, see how thick the goldcup flowers
Are lying in field and lane,
With dandelions to tell the hours
That never are told again.

Oh, may I squire you round the meads
And pick you posies gay?
—"Twill do no harm to take my arm.
"You may, young man, you may."

Ah, spring was sent for lass and lad,
'Tis now the blood runs gold,
And man and maid had best be glad
Before the world is old.
What flowers today may flower tomorrow,
But never as good as new.
—Suppose I wound my arm right round—
—" 'Tis true, young man, 'tis true."

Some lads there are, 'tis shame to say,
That only court to thief,
And once they bear the bloom away
'Tis little enough they leave.
Then keep your heart for men like me
And safe from trustless chaps.
My love is true and all for you.
"Perhaps, young man, perhaps."

Oh, look in my eyes then, can you doubt?
—Why, 'tis a mile from town.
How green the grass is all about!
We might as well sit down.
—Ah, life, what is it but a flower?
Why must true lovers sigh?
Be kind, have pity, my own, my pretty—
"Good-bye, young man, good-bye."

OH, WHEN I WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well did I behave.

And now the fancy passes by,
And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
Am quite myself again.

IS MY TEAM PLOUGHING?

"Is my team ploughing,
That I was used to drive
And hear the harness jingle
When I was man alive?"

Ay, the horses trample,
The harness jingles now;
No change though you lie under
The land you used to plough.

"Is football playing
Along the river shore,
With lads to chase the leather,
Now I stand up no more?"

Ay, the ball is flying,
The lads play heart and soul;
The goal stands up, the keeper
Stands up to keep the goal.

"Is my girl happy,
That I thought hard to leave,
And has she tired of weeping
As she lies down at eve?"

Ay, she lies down lightly,
 She lies not down to weep:
 Your girl is well contented.
 Be still, my lad, and sleep.

"Is my friend hearty,
 Now I am thin and pine,
 And has he found to sleep in
 A better bed than mine?"

Yes, lad, I lie easy,
 I lie as lads would choose;
 I cheer a dead man's sweetheart,
 Never ask me whose.

TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
 We chaired you through the market-place;
 Man and boy stood cheering by,
 And home we brought you shoulder-high.

Today, the road all runners come,
 Shoulder-high we bring you home,
 And set you at your threshold down,
 Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
 From fields where glory does not stay
 And early though the laurel grows
 It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
 Cannot see the record cut,
 And silence sounds no worse than cheers
 After earth has stopped the ears:

Now you will not swell the rout
 Of lads that wore their honours out,
 Runners whom renown outran
 And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,
 The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
 And hold to the low lintel up
 The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head
 Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
 And find unwithered on its curls
 The garland briefer than a girl's.

FROM FAR, FROM EVE AND MORNING

From far, from eve and morning
 And yon twelve-winded sky,
 The stuff of life to knit me
 Blew hither: here am I.

Now—for a breath I tarry
 Nor yet disperse apart—
 Take my hand quick and tell me,
 What have you in your heart.

Speak now, and I will answer;
 How shall I help you, say;
 Ere to the wind's twelve quarters
 I take my endless way.

THE IMMORTAL PART

When I meet the morning beam,
 Or lay me down at night to dream,
 I hear my bones within me say,
 "Another night, another day.

"When shall this slough of sense be cast,
 This dust of thoughts be laid at last,
 The man of flesh and soul be slain
 And the man of bone remain?

"This tongue that talks, these lungs that
 shout,
 These thews that hustle us about,
 This brain that fills the skull with schemes,
 And its humming hive of dreams,—

"These today are proud in power
 And lord it in their little hour:
 The immortal bones obey control
 Of dying flesh and dying soul.

"'Tis long till eve and morn are gone:
 Slow the endless night comes on,
 And late to fullness grows the birth
 That shall last as long as earth.

"Wanderers eastward, wanderers west,
 Know you why you cannot rest?
 'Tis that every mother's son
 Travails with a skeleton.

"Lie down in the bed of dust;
Bear the fruit that bear you must;
Bring the eternal seed to light,
And morn is all the same as night.

"Rest you so from trouble sore,
Fear the heat o' the sun no more,
Nor the snowing winter wild,
Now you labor not with child.

"Empty vessel, garment cast,
We that wore you long shall last.
—Another night, another day."
So my bones within me say.

Therefore they shall do my will
Today while I am master still,
And flesh and soul, now both are strong,
Shall hale the sullen slaves along,

Before this fire of sense decay,
This smoke of thought blow clean away,
And leave with ancient night alone
The steadfast and enduring bone.

TERENCE, THIS IS STUPID STUFF

"Terence, this is stupid stuff:
You eat your victuals fast enough;
There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,
To see the rate you drink your beer.
But, oh, good Lord, the verse you make
It gives a chap the bellyache.
The cow, the old cow, she is dead;
It sleeps well, the horned head.
We poor lads, 'tis our turn now
To hear such tunes as killed the cow.
Pretty friendship 'tis to rime
Your friends to death before their time
Moping melancholy mad.
Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad."

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,
There's brisker pipes than poetry.
Say, for what were hop-yards meant,
Or why was Burton built on Trent?
Oh, many a peer of England brews
Livelier liquor than the Muse,
And malt does more than Milton can

To justify God's ways to man.
Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink
For fellows whom it hurts to think;
Look into the pewter pot
To see the world as the world's not.
And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past,
The mischief is that 'twill not last.
Oh, I have been to Ludlow fair
And left my necktie God knows where,
And carried halfway home, or near,
Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer.
Then the world seemed none so bad,
And I myself a sterling lad;
And down in lovely muck I've lain,
Happy till I woke again.
Then I saw the morning sky—
Heigho, the tale was all a lie;
The world, it was the old world yet,
I was I, my things were wet,
And nothing now remained to do
But begin the game anew.

Therefore, since the world has still
Much good, but much less good than ill,
And while the sun and moon endure
Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,
I'd face it as a wise man would,
And train for ill and not for good.
'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale
Is not so brisk a brew as ale;
Out of a stem that scored the hand
I wrung it in a weary land.
But take it—if the smack is sour,
The better for the embittered hour;
It should do good to heart and head
When your soul is in my soul's stead;
And I will friend you, if I may,
In the dark and cloudy day.

There was a king reigned in the East;
There, when kings will sit to feast,
They get their fill before they think
With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.
He gathered all that springs to birth
From the many-venomed earth;
First a little, thence to more,
He sampled all her killing store;
And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,
Sate the king when healths went round.

They put arsenic in his meat
And stared aghast to watch him eat;
They poured strychnine in his cup
And shook to see him drink it up.

They shook, they stared as white's their
shirt;
Them it was their poison hurt.
—I tell the tale that I heard told.
Mithridates, he died old.

ROBINSON JEFFERS (*b. 1887*) is a nearly complete pessimist about civilization, but his belief that mankind is fated to perish from the earth permits a strange kind of cosmic optimism. At his best, the splendor of his verse matches the grandeur of the dooms he pronounces. His narrative poems often deal with tragic lives tortured by events into patterns of perversity and insanity; *The Roan Stallion* (1925) and *The Women at Point Sur* (1927) are typical. The imposing scenery of the Californian coast south from Monterey is as suitable a setting for his poems as the New England landscape for those of Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost.

TO THE STONE-CUTTERS

Stone-cutters fighting time with marble, you foredefeated
Challengers of oblivion,
Eat cynical earnings, knowing rock splits, records fall down,
The square-limbed Roman letters
Scale in the thaws, wear in the rain. The poet as well
Builds his monument mockingly;
For man will be blotted out, the blithe earth die, the brave sun
Die blind, his heart blackening:
Yet stones have stood for a thousand years, and pained thoughts found
The honey peace in old poems.

DIVINELY SUPERFLUOUS BEAUTY

The storm-dances of gulls, the barking game of seals,
Over and under the ocean . . .
Divinely superfluous beauty
Rules the games, presides over destinies, makes trees grow
And hills tower, waves fall.
The incredible beauty of joy
Stars with fire the joining of lips, O let our loves too
Be joined, there is not a maiden
Burns and thirsts for love

These nine poems by Robinson Jeffers are from *Selected Poems* (1937). Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

More than my blood for you, by the shore of seals while the wings
Weave like a web in the air
Divinely superfluous beauty.

BOATS IN A FOG

Sports and gallantries, the stage, the arts, the antics of dancers,
The exuberant voices of music,
Have charm for children but lack nobility; it is bitter earnestness
That makes beauty; the mind
Knows, grown adult.

A sudden fog-drift muffled the ocean,
A throbbing of engines moved in it,
At length, a stone's throw out, between the rocks and the vapor,
One by one moved shadows
Out of the mystery, shadows, fishing-boats, trailing each other,
Following the cliff for guidance,
Holding a difficult path between the peril of the sea-fog
And the foam on the shore granite.
One by one, trailing their leader, six crept by me,
Out of the vapor and into it,
The throb of their engines subdued by the fog, patient and cautious,
Coasting all around the peninsula
Back to the buoys in Monterey harbor. A flight of pelicans
Is nothing lovelier to look at;
The flight of the planets is nothing nobler; all the arts lose virtue
Against the essential reality
Of creatures going about their business among the equally
Earnest elements of nature.

NEW MEXICAN MOUNTAIN

I watch the Indians dancing to help the young corn at Taos pueblo. The old men
squat in a ring
And make the song, the young women with fat bare arms, and a few shame-faced
young men, shuffle the dance.

The lean-muscled young men are naked to the narrow loins, their breasts and
backs daubed with white clay,
Two eagle-feathers plume the black heads. They dance with reluctance, they are
growing civilized; the old men persuade them.

Only the drum is confident, it thinks the world has not changed; the beating heart,
the simplest of rhythms,
It thinks the world has not changed at all; it is only a dreamer, a brainless heart,
the drum has no eyes.

These tourists have eyes, the hundred watching the dance, white Americans,
hungrily too, with reverence, not laughter;

Pilgrims from civilization, anxiously seeking beauty, religion, poetry; pilgrims from the vacuum.

People from cities, anxious to be human again. Poor show how they suck you empty! The Indians are emptied,
And certainly there was never religion enough, nor beauty nor poetry here . . . to fill Americans.

Only the drum is confident, it thinks the world has not changed. Apparently only myself and the strong
Tribal drum, and the rockhead of Taos mountain, remember that civilization is a transient sickness.

SHINE, PERISHING REPUBLIC

While this America settles in the mould of its vulgarity, heavily thickening to empire,
And protest, only a bubble in the molten mass, pops and sighs out, and the mass hardens,

I sadly remember that the flower fades to make fruit, the fruit rots to make earth. Out of the mother; and through the spring exultances, ripeness and decadence; and home to the mother.

You making haste haste on decay: not blameworthy; life is good, be it stubbornly long or suddenly
A mortal splendor: meteors are not needed less than mountains: shine, perishing republic.

But for my children, I would rather have them keep their distance from the thickening center; corruption
Never has been compulsory, when the cities lie at the monster's feet there are left the mountains.

And boys, be in nothing so moderate as in love of man, a clever servant, insufferable master.

There is the trap that catches noblest spirits, that caught—they say—God, when he walked on earth.

SHINE, REPUBLIC

The quality of these trees, green height; of the sky, shining, of water, a clear flow; of the rock, hardness
And reticence: each is noble in its quality. The love of freedom has been the quality of Western man.

There is a stubborn torch that flames from Marathon to Concord, its dangerous beauty binding three ages

Into one time; the waves of barbarism and civilization have eclipsed but have never quenched it.

For the Greeks the love of beauty, for Rome of ruling; for the present age the passionate love of discovery;
But in one noble passion we are one; and Washington, Luther, Tacitus, Aeschylus, one kind of man.

And you, America, that passion made you. You were not born to prosperity, you were born to love freedom.
You did not say "en masse," you said "independence." But we cannot have all the luxuries and freedom also.

Freedom is poor and laborious; that torch is not safe but hungry, and often requires blood for its fuel.
You will tame it against it burn too clearly, you will hood it like a kept hawk, you will perch it on the wrist of Caesar.

But keep the tradition, conserve the forms, the observances, keep the spot sore. Be great, carve deep your heel-marks.
The states of the next age will no doubt remember you, and edge their love of freedom with contempt of luxury.

WISE MEN IN THEIR BAD HOURS

Wise men in their bad hours have envied
The little people making merry like grasshoppers
In spots of sunlight, hardly thinking
Backward but never forward, and if they somehow
Take hold upon the future they do it
Half asleep, with the tools of generation
Foolishly reduplicating
Folly in thirty-year periods; they eat and laugh too,
Groan against labors, wars and partings,
Dance, talk, dress and undress; wise men have pretended
The summer insects enviable;
One must indulge the wise in moments of mockery.
Strength and desire possess the future,
The breed of the grasshopper shrills, "What does the future
Matter, we shall be dead?" Ah, grasshoppers,
Death's a fierce meadowlark: but to die having made
Something more equal to the centuries
Than muscle and bone, is mostly to shed weakness.
The mountains are dead stone, the people
Admire or hate their stature, their insolent quietness,
The mountains are not softened nor troubled
And a few dead men's thoughts have the same temper.

HOPE IS NOT FOR THE WISE

Hope is not for the wise, fear is for fools;
 Change and the world, we think, are racing to a fall,
 Open-eyed and helpless, in every newscast that is the news:
 The time's events would seem mere chaos but all
 Drift the one deadly direction. But this is only
 The August thunder of the age, not the November.
 Wise men hope nothing, the wise are naturally lonely
 And think November as good as April, the wise remember
 That Caesar and even final Augustulus had heirs,
 And men lived on; rich unplanned life on earth
 After the foreign wars and the civil wars, the border wars
 And the barbarians: music and religion, honor and mirth
 Renewed life's lost enchantments. But if life even
 Had perished utterly, Oh perfect loveliness of earth and heaven.

NIGHT WITHOUT SLEEP

The world's as the world is; the nations rearm and prepare to change; the age of
 tyrants returns;
 The greatest civilization that has ever existed builds itself higher towers on break-
 ing foundations.
 Recurrent episodes; they were determined when the ape's children first ran in packs,
 chipped flint to an edge.

I lie and hear

dark rain beat the roof, and the blind wind.

In the morning perhaps

I shall find strength again

To value the immense beauty of this time of the world, the flowers of decay their
 pitiful loveliness, the fever-dream

Tapestries that back the drama and are called the future. This ebb of vitality feels
 the ignoble and cruel

Incidents, not the vast abstract order.

I lie and hear dark rain beat the roof, and
 the night-blind wind.

In the Ventana country darkness and rain and the roar of waters fill the deep
 mountain-throats.

The creekside shelf of sand where we lay last August under a slip of stars,
 And firelight played on the leaning gorge-walls, is drowned and lost. The deer
 of the country huddle on a ridge

In a close herd under madrone-trees; they tremble when a rock-slide goes down,
 they open great darkness-
 Drinking eyes and press closer.

Cataracts of rock

Rain down the mountain from cliff to cliff and torment the stream-bed. The stream
deals with them. The laurels are wounded,
Redwoods go down with their earth and lie thwart the gorge. I hear the torrent
boulders battering each other,
I feel the flesh of the mountain move on its bones in the wet darkness.

Is this more beautiful
Than man's disasters? These wounds will heal in their time; so will humanity's.
This is more beautiful . . . at night . . .

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828-1909), *although keenly aware of the beauties of the natural world about him, wrote poetry that is less emotional than rational. In this respect it is in great contrast to that of Frost, Dickinson, Wylie, Housman, Jeffers, and Whitman. In fact, it perhaps raises the question to what extent a lyric poet may devote himself to reasoning in verse, to discussing problems of ethics and metaphysics, without injuring his poems as lyrics. Yet it is highly interesting to see how he arrives at a strong and vital optimism after accepting premises, such as the struggle for existence and the necessity for self-sacrifice, which lead a poet like Housman to pessimistic conclusions. He is best known, of course, for his great novels like The Ordeal of Richard Feverel (1859) and The Egoist (1879).*

EARTH'S SECRET

Not solitarily in fields we find
Earth's secret open, though one page is
there,—
Her plainest, such as children spell, and
share
With bird and beast,—raised letters for the
blind.
Not where the troubled passions toss the
mind,
In turbid cities, can the key be bare.
It hangs for those who hither thither fare,
Close interthreading nature with our kind.
They, hearing History speak, of what men
were,
And have become, are wise. The gain is
great
In vision and solidity; it lives.
Yet at a thought of life apart from her,
Solidity and vision lose their state,
For Earth, that gives the milk, the spirit
gives.

DIRGE IN WOODS

A wind sways the pines,
And below
Not a breath of wild air;
Still as the mosses that glow
On the flooring and over the lines
Of the roots here and there.
The pine-tree drops its dead;
They are quiet, as under the sea.
Overhead, overhead
Rushes life in a race,
As the clouds the clouds chase;
And we go,
And we drop like the fruits of the tree,
Even we,
Even so.

THE THRUSH IN FEBRUARY

I know him, February's thrush,
And loud at eve he valentines

On sprays that paw the naked bush
Where soon will sprout the thorns and vines.

Now ere the foreign singer thrills
Our vale his plain-song pipe he pours,
A herald of the million bills;
And heed him not, the loss is yours.

My study, flanked with ivied fir
And budded beech with dry leaves curled,
Perched over yew and juniper,
He neighbors, piping to his world:—

The wooded pathways dank on brown,
The branches on gray cloud a web,
The long green roller of the down,
An image of the deluge-ebb:—

And farther, they may hear along
The stream beneath the poplar row,
By fits, like welling rocks, the song
Spouts of blushful Spring in flow.

But most he loves to front the vale
When waves of warm Southwestern rains
Have left our heavens clear in pale,
With faintest beck of moist red veins:

Vermilion wings, by distance held
To pause aflight while fleeting swift:
And high aloft the pearl inshelled
Her lucid glow in glow will lift;

A little south of colored sky;
Directing, gravely amorous,
The human of a tender eye
Through pure celestial on us:

Remote, not alien; still, not cold;
Unraying yet, more pearl than star;
She seems a while the vale to hold
In trance, and homelier makes the far.

Then Earth her sweet unscented breathes;
An orb of luster quits the height;
And like broad iris-flags, in wreaths
The sky takes darkness, long ere quite.

His Island voice then shall you hear,
Not ever after separate
From such a twilight of the year
Advancing to the vernal gate.

He sings me, out of Winter's throat,
The young time with the life ahead;
And my young time his leaping note
Recalls to spirit-mirth from dead.

Imbedded in a land of greed,
Of mammon-quakings dire as Earth's,
My care was but to soothe my need;
At peace among the little worths

To light and song my yearning aimed;
To that deep breast of songs and light
Which men have barrenest proclaimed;
As 'tis to senses pricked with fright.

So mine are these new fruitings rich
The simple to the common brings;
I keep the youth of souls who pitch
Their joy in this old heart of things:

Who feel the Coming young as aye,
Thrice hopeful on the ground we plow;
Alive for life, awake to die;
One voice to cheer the seedling Now.

Full lasting is the song, though he,
The singer, passes: lasting too,
For souls not lent in usury,
The rapture of the forward view.

With that I bear my senses fraught
Till what I am fast shoreward drives.
They are the vessel of the Thought.
The vessel splits, the Thought survives.

Nought else are we when sailing brave,
Save husks to raise and bid it burn.
Glimpse of its livingness will wave
A light the senses can discern

Across the river of the death,
Their close. Meanwhile, O twilight bird
Of promise! bird of happy breath!
I hear, I would the City heard.

The City of the smoky fray;
A prodded ox, it drags and moans:
Its Morrow no man's child; its Day
A vulture's morsel beaked to bones.

It strives without a mark for strife;
It feasts beside a famished host:

The loose restraint of wanton life,
That threatened penance in the ghost!

Yet there our battle urges; there
Spring heroes many: issuing thence,
Names that should leave no vacant air
For fresh delight in confidence.

Life was to them the bag of grain,
And Death the weedy harrow's tooth.
Those warriors of the sighting brain
Give worn Humanity new youth.

Our song and star are they to lead
The tidal multitude and blind
From bestial to the higher breed
By fighting souls of love divined.

They scorned the ventral dream of peace,
Unknown in nature. This they knew:
That life begets with fair increase
Beyond the flesh, if life be true.

Just reason based on valiant blood,
The instinct bred afield would match
To pipe thereof a swelling flood,
Were men of Earth made wise in watch.

Though now the numbers count as drops
An urn might bear, they father Time.
She shapes anew her dusty crops;
Her quick in their own likeness climb.

Of their own force do they create;
They climb to light, in her their root.
Your brutish cry at muffled fate
She smites with pangs of worse than brute.

She, judged of shrinking nerves, appears
A Mother whom no cry can melt;
But read her past desires and fears,
The letters on her breast are spelt.

A slayer, yea, as when she pressed
Her savage to the slaughter-heaps,
To sacrifice she prompts her best:
She reaps them as the sower reaps.

But read her thought to speed the race,
And stars rush forth of blackest night:

You chill not at a cold embrace
To come, nor dread a dubious might.

Her double visage, double voice,
In oneness rise to quench the doubt.
This breath, her gift, has only choice
Of service, breathe we in or out.

Since Pain and Pleasure on each hand
Led our wild steps from slimy rock
To yonder sweeps of gardenland,
We breathe but to be sword or block.

The sighting brain her good decree
Accepts; obeys those guides, in faith,
By reason hourly fed, that she,
To some the clod, to some the wraith,

Is more, no mask; a flame, a stream.
Flame, stream, are we, in mid career
From torrent source, delirious dream,
To heaven-reflecting currents clear.

And why the sons of Strength have been
Her cherished offspring ever; how
The Spirit served by her is seen
Through Law; perusing love will show.

Love born of knowledge, love that gains
Vitality as Earth it mates,
The meaning of the Pleasures, Pains,
The Life, the Death, illuminates.

For love we Earth, then serve we all;
Her mystic secret then is ours:
We fall, or view our treasures fall,
Unclouded, as beholds her flowers

Earth, from a night of frosty wreck,
Enrobed in morning's mounted fire,
When lowly, with a broken neck,
The crocus lays her cheek to mire.

THE LARK ASCENDING

He rises and begins to round;
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur, and shake,—
All interwoven and spreading wide,

Like water-dimples down a tide
 Where ripple ripple overcurls
 And eddy into eddy whirls;
 A press of hurried notes that run
 So fleet they scarce are more than one,
 Yet changingly the trills repeat,
 And linger ringing while they fleet,—
 Sweet to the quick o' the ear; and dear
 To her beyond the handmaid ear,
 Who sits beside our inner springs,
 Too often dry for this he brings,
 Which seems the very jet of earth
 At sight of sun, her music's mirth,
 As up he wings the spiral stair,
 A song of light, and pierces air
 With fountain ardor, fountain play,
 To reach the shining tops of day,
 And drink, in everything discerned,
 An ecstasy to music turned,—
 Impelled by what his happy bill
 Disperses; drinking, showering still,
 Unthinking save that he may give
 His voice the outlet, there to live
 Renewed in endless notes of glee,
 So thirsty of his voice is he:
 For all to hear and all to know
 That he is joy, awake, aglow,—
 The tumult of the heart to hear
 Through pureness filtered crystal-clear,—
 And know the pleasure sprinkled bright
 By simple singing of delight;
 Shrill, irreflective, unrestrained,
 Rapt, ringing, on the jet sustained
 Without a break, without a fall,
 Sweet-silvery, sheer lyrical,
 Perennial, quavering up the chord
 Like myriad dews of sunny sward
 That trembling into fullness shine,
 And sparkle dropping argentine:
 Such wooing as the ear receives,
 From zephyr caught in choric leaves
 Of aspens when their chattering net
 Is flushed to white with shivers wet;
 And such the water-spirit's chime
 On mountain heights in morning's prime,
 Too freshly sweet to seem excess,
 Too animate to need a stress;
 But wider over many heads
 The starry voice ascending spreads,
 Awakening, as it waxes thin,

The best in us to him akin;
 And every face to watch him raised
 Puts on the light of children praised,—
 So rich our human pleasure ripes
 When sweetness on sincereness pipes,
 Though naught be promised from the seas,
 But only a soft-ruffling breeze
 Sweep glittering on a still content,
 Serenity in ravishment.

For, singing till his heaven fills,
 'Tis love of earth that he instills;
 And ever winging up and up,
 Our valley is his golden cup,
 And he the wine which overflows
 To lift us with him as he goes:
 The woods and brooks, the sheep and kine,
 He is,—the hills, the human line,
 The meadows green, the fallows brown,
 The dreams of labor in the town.
 He sings the sap, the quickened veins;
 The wedding song of sun and rains
 He is, the dance of children, thanks
 Of sowers, shout of primrose-banks,
 And eye of violets while they breathe.
 All these the circling song will wreath;
 And you shall hear the herb and tree,
 The better heart of men shall see,
 Shall feel celestially,—as long
 As you crave nothing save the song.

Was never voice of ours could say
 Our inmost in the sweetest way,
 Like yonder voice aloft, and link
 All hearers in the song they drink.
 Our wisdom speaks from failing blood,
 Our passion is too full in flood,
 We want the key of his wild note
 Of truthful in a tuneful throat,
 The song seraphically free
 Of taint of personality,—
 So pure that it salutes the suns,
 The voice of one for millions,
 In whom the millions rejoice
 For giving their one spirit voice.

Yet men have we, whom we revere,
 Now names,—and men still housing here,—
 Whose lives, by many a battle-dint
 Defaced, and grinding wheels on flint,

Yield substance, though they sing not, sweet
 For song our highest heaven to greet:
 Whom heavenly singing gives us new,
 Enspheres them brilliant in our blue,
 From firmest base to farthest leap,
 Because their love of Earth is deep,
 And they are warriors in accord
 With life to serve and pass reward,—
 So touching purest, and so heard
 In the brain's reflex of yon bird.
 Wherefore their soul in me,—or mine,
 Through self-forgetfulness divine,
 In them,—that song aloft maintains,
 To fill the sky and thrill the plains
 With showerings drawn from human stores;
 As he to silence nearer soars,
 Extends the world at wings and dome,
 More spacious making more our home;
 Till lost on his aerial rings
 In light,—and then the fancy sings.

WOODLAND PEACE

Sweet as Eden is the air,
 And Eden-sweet the ray.

No Paradise is lost for them
 Who foot by branching root and stem,
 And lightly with the woodland share
 The change of night and day.

Here all say,
 We serve her, even as I:
 We brood, we strive to sky,
 We gaze upon decay,
 We wot of life through death,
 How each feeds each we spy;
 And is a tangle round,
 Are patient; what is dumb
 We question not, nor ask
 The silent to give sound,
 The hidden to unmask,
 The distant to draw near.

And this the woodland saith:
 I know not hope or fear;
 I take whate'er may come;
 I raise my head to aspects fair,
 From foul I turn away.

Sweet as Eden is the air,
 And Eden-sweet the ray.

WALT WHITMAN (1819-1892) *lives as the author of one volume, Leaves of Grass, which grew larger and larger, greater and greater in succeeding editions, as he tried to crowd into it everything which he observed and felt—especially everything American. So inclusive were his enthusiasms, so sweeping his verse rhythms, that the controlled emotions and careful forms of Frost, Dickinson, Wylie, and Housman appear limited in contrast. Yet his very inclusiveness raises the questions whether a multitude of descriptive details and emotional stimuli may not be as fatal to lyric poetry as too much reasoning and indeed whether emotion can be sustained through a long poem—questions which each reader must answer for himself.*

THE COMMONPLACE

The commonplace I sing;
 How cheap is health! how cheap nobility!
 Abstinence, no falsehood, no gluttony, lust;

These nine poems by Walt Whitman are from *Leaves of Grass*. Copyright, 1891, by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

The open air I sing, freedom, toleration,
 (Take here the mainest lesson—less from books—less from the schools,)
 The common day and night—the common earth and waters,
 Your farm—your work, trade, occupation,
 The democratic wisdom underneath, like solid ground for all.

ADIEU TO A SOLDIER

Adieu, O soldier,
 You of the rude campaigning (which we shared),
 The rapid march, the life of the camp,
 The hot contention of opposing fronts, the long manoeuvre,
 Red battles with their slaughter, the stimulus, the strong terrific game,
 Spell of all brave and manly hearts, the trains of time through you and like of you
 all fill'd,
 With war and war's expression.

Adieu, dear comrade,
 Your mission is fulfill'd—but I, more warlike,
 Myself and this contentious soul of mine,
 Still on our own campaigning bound,
 Through untried roads with ambushes, opponents lined,
 Through many a sharp defeat and many a crisis, often baffled,
 Here marching, ever marching on, a war fight out—aye here,
 To fiercer, weightier battles give expression.

GIVE ME THE SPLENDID SILENT SUN

I

Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-dazzling,
 Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the orchard,
 Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,
 Give me an arbour, give me the trellis'd grape,
 Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-moving animals teaching content,
 Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus west of the Mississippi, and I
 looking up at the stars,
 Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers where I can walk undis-
 turb'd,
 Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom I should never tire,
 Give me a perfect child, give me away aside from the noise of the world a rural
 domestic life,
 Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by myself, for my own ears only,
 Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again O Nature your primal sanities!
 These demanding to have them (tired with ceaseless excitement, and rack'd by the
 war-strife),

These to procure incessantly asking, rising in cries from my heart,
 While yet incessantly asking still I adhere to my city,
 Day upon day and year upon year, O city, walking your streets,
 Where you hold me enchain'd a certain time refusing to give me up,
 Yet giving to make me glutt'd, enrich'd of soul, you give me forever faces;
 (O I see what I sought to escape, confronting, reversing my cries,
 I see my own soul trampling down what it ask'd for).

II

Keep your splendid silent sun,
 Keep your woods, O Nature, and the quiet places by the woods,
 Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your corn-fields and orchards,
 Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields where the Ninth-month bees hum;
 Give me faces and streets—give me these phantoms incessant and endless along
 the trottoirs!
 Give me interminable eyes—give me women—give me comrades and lovers by the
 thousand!
 Let me see new ones every day—let me hold new ones by the hand every day!
 Give me such shows—give me the streets of Manhattan!
 Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching—give me the sound of the trumpets
 and drums!
 (The soldiers in companies or regiments—some starting away, flush'd and reckless,
 Some, their time up, returning with thinn'd ranks, young, yet very old, worn,
 marching, noticing nothing;)
 Give me the shores and wharves heavy-fringed with black ships!
 O such for me! O an intense life, full to repletion and varied!
 The life of the theatre, bar-room, huge hotel, for me!
 The saloon of the steamer! the crowded excursion for me! the torchlight procession!
 The dense brigade bound for the war, with high piled military wagons following;
 People, endless, streaming, with strong voices, passions, pageants,
 Manhattan streets with their powerful throbs, with beating drums as now,
 The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank of muskets (even the sight of
 the wounded),
 Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical chorus!
 Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.

ON THE BEACH AT NIGHT

On the beach at night,
 Stands a child with her father,
 Watching the east, the autumn sky.

Up through the darkness,
 While ravening clouds, the burial clouds, in black masses spreading,
 Lower sullen and fast athwart and down the sky,
 Amid a transparent clear belt of ether yet left in the east,
 Ascends large and calm the lord-star Jupiter,
 And nigh at hand, only a very little above,
 Swim the delicate sisters the Pleiades.

From the beach the child holding the hand of her father,
 Those burial clouds that lower victorious soon to devour all,
 Watching, silently weeps.

Weep not, child,
 Weep not, my darling,
 With these kisses let me remove your tears,
 The ravening clouds shall not long be victorious;
 They shall not long possess the sky, they devour the stars only in apparition,
 Jupiter shall emerge, be patient, watch again another night, the Pleiades shall
 emerge,
 They are immortal, all those stars both silvery and golden shall shine out again,
 The great stars and the little ones shall shine out again, they endure,
 The vast immortal suns and the long-enduring pensive moons shall again shine.

Then dearest child mournest thou only for Jupiter?
 Considerest thou alone the burial of the stars?
 Something there is,
 (With my lips soothing thee, adding I whisper,
 I give thee the first suggestion, the problem and indirection,)
 Something there is more immortal even than the stars,
 (Many the burials, many the days and nights, passing away,)
 Something that shall endure longer even than lustrous Jupiter,
 Longer than sun or any revolving satellite,
 Or the radiant sisters the Pleiades.

OUT OF THE CRADLE ENDLESSLY ROCKING

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
 Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
 Out of the Ninth-month midnight,
 Over the sterile sands and the fields beyond, where the child leaving his bed wan-
 der'd alone, bareheaded, barefoot,
 Down from the shower'd halo,
 Up from the mystic play of shadows twining and twisting as if they were alive,
 Out from the patches of briars and blackberries,
 From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,
 From your memories, sad brother, from the fitful risings and fallings I heard,
 From under that yellow half-moon late-risen and swollen as if with tears,
 From those beginning notes of yearning and love there in the mist,
 From the thousand responses of my heart never to cease,
 From the myriad thence-arous'd words,
 From the word stronger and more delicious than any,
 From such as now they start the scene revisiting,
 As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,
 Borne hither, ere all eludes me, hurriedly,
 A man, yet by these tears a little boy again,
 Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,
 I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter,

Taking all hints to use them, but swiftly leaping beyond them,
A reminiscence sing.

Once Paumanok,
When the lilac-scent was in the air and Fifth-month grass was growing,
Up this seashore in some briers,
Two feather'd guests from Alabama, two together,
And their nest, and four light-green eggs spotted with brown,
And every day the he-bird to and fro near at hand,
And every day the she-bird crouch'd on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

Shine! shine! shine!
Pour down your warmth, great sun!
While we bask, we two together.
Two together!

Winds blow south, or winds blow north,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
While we two keep together.

Till of a sudden,
May-be kill'd, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouch'd not on the nest,
Nor return'd that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appear'd again.

And thenceforward all summer in the sound of the sea,
And at night under the full of the moon in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

Blow! blow! blow!
Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore;
I wait and I wait till you blow my mate to me.

Yes, when the stars glisten'd,
All night long on the prong of a moss-scallop'd stake,
Down almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer wonderful causing tears.

He call'd on his mate,
He pour'd forth the meanings which I of all men know.

Yes my brother I know,
The rest might not, but I have treasur'd every note,
For more than once dimly down to the beach gliding,

Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself with the shadows,
 Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights after their sorts,
 The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,
 I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
 Listen'd long and long.

Listen'd to keep, to sing, now translating the notes,
 Following you my brother.

Soothe! soothe! soothe!
Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind embracing and lapping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me, not me.
Low hangs the moon, it rose late,
It is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.

O madly the sea pushes upon the land,
With love, with love.

O night! do I not see my love fluttering out among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?

Loud! loud! loud!
Loud I call to you, my love!
High and clear, I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my love.

Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon do not keep her from me any longer.

Land! land! O land!
Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back again if you
only would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.

O rising stars!
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with some of you.

O throat! O trembling throat!
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.

Shake out carols!
Solitary here, the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O under that moon where she droops almost down into the sea!
O reckless despairing carols.

*But soft, sink low!
Soft! let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment you husky-nois'd sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint, I must be still, be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me.*

*Hither my love!
Here I am! here!
With this just-sustain'd note I announce myself to you,
This gentle call is for you my love, for you.*

*Do not be decoy'd elsewhere,
That is the whistle of the wind, it is not my voice,
That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.*

*O darkness! O in vain!
O I am very sick and sorrowful.*

*O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon the sea!
O troubled reflection in the sea!
O throat! O throbbing heart!
And I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.*

*O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!
In the air, in the woods, over fields,
Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!
But my mate no more, no more with me!
We two together no more.*

*The aria sinking,
All else continuing, the stars shining,
The winds blowing, the notes of the bird continuous echoing,
With angry moans the fierce old mother incessantly moaning,
On the sands of Paumanok's shore gray and rustling,
The yellow half-moon enlarged, sagging down, drooping, the face of the sea almost touching,
The boy ecstatic, with his bare feet the waves, with his hair the atmosphere dallying,
The love in the heart long pent, now loose, now at last tumultuously bursting,
The aria's meaning, the ears, the soul, swiftly depositing,
The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,
The colloquy there, the trio, each uttering,
The undertone, the savage old mother incessantly crying,
To the boy's soul's questions sullenly timing, some drown'd secret hissing,
To the outsetting bard.*

*Demon or bird! (said the boy's soul,)
Is it indeed toward your mate you sing? or is it really to me?
For I, that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping, now I have heard you,
Now in a moment I know what I am for, I awake,*

And already a thousand singers, a thousand songs, clearer, louder and more sorrowful than yours,
A thousand warbling echoes have started to life within me, never to die.

O you singer solitary, singing by yourself, projecting me,
O solitary me listening, never more shall I cease perpetuating you,
Never more shall I escape, never more the reverberations,
Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent from me,
Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was before what there in the night,
By the sea under the yellow and sagging moon,
The messenger there arous'd, the fire, the sweet hell within,
The unknown want, the destiny of me.
O give me the clew! (it lurks in the night here somewhere,)
O if I am to have so much, let me have more!

A word then, (for I will conquer it,)
The word final, superior to all,
Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;
Are you whispering it, and have been all the time, you sea-waves?
Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

Whereto answering, the sea,
Delaying not, hurrying not,
Whisper'd me through the night, and very plainly before daybreak,
Lisp'd to me the low and delicious word death,
And again death, death, death, death,
Hissing melodious, neither like the bird nor like my arous'd child's heart,
But edging near as privately for me rustling at my feet,
Creeping thence steadily up to my ears and laving me softly all over,
Death, death, death, death, death.

Which I do not forget,
But fuse the song of my dusky demon and brother,
That he sang to me in the moonlight on Paumanok's gray beach,
With the thousand responsive songs at random,
My own songs awaked from that hour,
And with them the key, the word up from the waves,
The word of the sweetest song and all songs,
That strong and delicious word which, creeping to my feet,
(Or like some old crone rocking the cradle, swathed in sweet garments, bending
aside,)
The sea whisper'd me.

WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOM'D

I

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the night,
I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.

Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
 Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
 And thought of him I love.

2

O powerful western fallen star!
 O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!
 O great star disappear'd—O the black murk that hides the star!
 O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul of me!
 O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

3

In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the white-wash'd palings,
 Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
 With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,
 With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the dooryard,
 With delicate-color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
 A sprig with its flower I break.

4

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
 A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.
 Solitary the thrush,
 The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
 Sings by himself a song.

Song of the bleeding throat,
 Death's outlet song of life, (for well dear brother I know,
 If thou wast not granted to sing thou would'st surely die.)

5

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
 Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets peep'd from the
 ground, spotting the gray débris,
 Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes, passing the endless grass,
 Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its shroud in the dark-brown
 fields uprisen,
 Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the orchards,
 Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
 Night and day journeys a coffin.

6

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
 Through day and night with the great cloud darkening the land,
 With the pomp of the inloop'd flags with the cities draped in black,
 With the show of the States themselves as of crape-veil'd women standing,
 With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the night,
 With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of faces and the unbared heads,

With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the sombre faces,
 With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices rising strong and solemn,
 With all the mournful voices of the dirges pour'd around the coffin,
 The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—where amid these you journey,
 With the tolling, tolling bells' perpetual clang,
 Here, coffin that slowly passes,
 I give you my sprig of lilac.

7

(Nor for you, for one alone,
 Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring,
 For fresh as the morning, thus would I chant a song for you O sane and sacred
 death.

All over bouquets of roses,
 O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies,
 But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,
 Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,
 With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,
 For you and the coffins all of you O death.)

8

O western orb sailing the heaven,
 Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I walk'd,
 As I walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,
 As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night after night,
 As you droop'd from the sky low down as if to my side, (while the other stars
 all look'd on,)
 As we wander'd together the solemn night, (for something I know not what kept
 me from sleep,)
 As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west how full you were of woe,
 As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool transparent night,
 As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the netherward black of the night,
 As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you sad orb,
 Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone.

9

Sing on there in the swamp,
 O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear your call,
 I hear, I come presently, I understand you,
 But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detain'd me,
 The star my departing comrade holds and detains me.

10

O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved?
 And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that has gone?
 And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Sea-winds blown from east and west,
 Blown from the Eastern sea and blown from the Western sea, till there on the
 prairies meeting,
 These and with these and the breath of my chant,
 I'll perfume the grave of him I love.

II

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
 And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
 To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,
 With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray smoke lucid and bright,
 With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent, sinking sun, burning,
 expanding the air,
 With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, and the pale green leaves of the trees
 prolific,
 In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river, with a wind-dapple here
 and there,
 With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky, and shadows,
 And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
 And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the workmen homeward return-
 ing.

12

Lo, body and soul—this land,
 My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides, and the
 ships,
 The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the light, Ohio's shores
 and flashing Missouri,
 And ever the far-spreading prairies cover'd with grass and corn.

Lo, the most excellent sun so calm and haughty,
 The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,
 The gentle soft-born measureless light,
 The miracle spreading bathing all, the fulfill'd noon,
 The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the stars,
 Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

13

Sing on, sing on you gray-brown bird,
 Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes,
 Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.
 Sing on dearest brother, warble your reedy song,
 Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.
 O liquid and free and tender!
 O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer!
 You only I hear—yet the star holds me, (but will soon depart,)
 Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.

Now while I sat in the day and look'd forth,
 In the close of the day with its light and the fields of spring, and the farmers pre-
 paring their crops,
 In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes and forests,
 In the heavenly aerial beauty, (after the perturb'd winds and the storms,)
 Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing, and the voices of chil-
 dren and women,
 The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they sail'd,
 And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields all busy with labor,
 And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each with its meals and
 minutia of daily usages,
 And the streets how their throbbings throb'd, and the cities pent—lo, then and
 there,
 Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me with the rest,
 Appear'd the cloud, appear'd the long black trail,
 And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge of death.

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
 And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
 And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the hands of companions,
 I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,
 Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in the dimness,
 To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still.

And the singer so shy to the rest receiv'd me,
 The gray-brown bird I know receiv'd us comrades three,
 And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,
 From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,
 Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
 As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night,
 And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

*Come lovely and soothing death,
 Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
 In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
 Sooner or later delicate death.*

*Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
 For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
 And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
 For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.*

*Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
 Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?*

*Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.*

*Approach strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.*

*From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and feastings for thee,
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are fitting,
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.*

*The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.*

*Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the prairies wide,
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee O death.*

15

To the tally of my soul,
Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
With pure deliberate notes spreading filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim,
Clear in the freshness moist and the swamp-perfume,
And I with my comrades there in the night.

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of visions.

And I saw askant the armies,
I saw as in noiseless dreams hundreds of battle-flags,
Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierc'd with missiles I saw them,
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody,
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs, (and all in silence,)
And the staffs all splinter'd and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,
I saw the débris and débris of all the slain soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought,
They themselves were fully at rest, they suffer'd not,
The living remain'd and suffer'd, the mother suffer'd,
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffer'd,
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd.

Passing the visions, passing the night,
 Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,
 Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song of my soul,
 Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-altering song,
 As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling, flooding the night,
 Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and yet again bursting with
 joy,

Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,
 As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses,
 Passing, I leave thee lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
 I leave thee there in the dooryard, blooming, returning with spring.

I cease from my song for thee,
 From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee,
 O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each to keep and all, retrievements out of the night,
 The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
 And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul,
 With the lustrous and drooping star with the countenance full of woe,
 With the holders holding my hand nearing the call of the bird,
 Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I
 loved so well,
 For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
 Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
 There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

WHEN I HEARD THE LEARN'D ASTRONOMER

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
 When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
 When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
 When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the
 lecture-room,
 How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
 Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
 In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
 Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER

A noiseless patient spider,
 I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
 Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
 It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself.
 Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to connect them.
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

THE BASE OF ALL METAPHYSICS

And now, gentlemen,
A word I give to remain in your memories and minds,
As base and finale too for all metaphysics.

(So to the students the old professor,
At the close of his crowded course.)

Having studied the new and antique, the Greek and Germanic systems,
Kant having studied and stated, Fichte and Schelling and Hegel,
Stated the lore of Plato, and Socrates greater than Plato,
And greater than Socrates sought and stated, Christ divine having studied long,
I see reminiscent today those Greek and Germanic systems,
See the philosophies all, Christian churches and tenets see,
Yet underneath Socrates clearly see, and underneath Christ the divine I see,
The dear love of man for his comrade, the attraction of friend to friend,
Of the well-married husband and wife, of children and parents,
Of city for city and land for land.



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